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Princess of Wales.

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Caroline the Illustrious

Queen-Consort of George II. and sometime Queen-Regent

A Study of her Life and Time

BY

W. H. WILKINS, M.A., F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE LOVE OF AN UNCROWNED QUEEN"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

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Pierce fund.
(2 vol.)

TO

THE COUNTESS OF WARWICK

La beauté est le partage des uns, l'intelligence celui des autres; la réunion de ces dons ne se rencontre que chez certains mortels favorisés des dieux.

LEIBNIZ TO QUEEN CAROLINE.

PREFACE.

It is characteristic of the way in which historians

Wilkins, William Henry. Caroline, the illustrious queen-consort of George II. and sometime queen-regent; a study of her life and time.

London & N. Y. *Longmans* 1901. 2v. portraits, plates, facsim. O. 36s.

An authoritative biography of Caroline, 1683–1737, by the author of the life of George II's mother, entitled: "The love of an uncrowned queen"; from Hanoverian archives, etc., especially valuable for the period before 1714, and its light on the Hanoverian court, particularly the Electress Sophia, also for its gossip concerning the courts of Georges I and II, and the queen's relations with Walpole.

Eng. Hist. R. 17:586 (B. Williams); Ath. 1902, 1:71; Acad. 62:80.

W. DAWSON JOHNSTON, Nov. 1902.

5-4/16.29

civil and religious liberty, which were then bound up with the maintenance of the Hanoverian dynasty, were firmly established in England.

Therefore no apology is needed for attempting to portray the life of this remarkable princess, and endeavouring to give some idea of the influence

PREFACE.

It is characteristic of the way in which historians have neglected the House of Hanover that no life with any claim to completeness has yet been written of Caroline of Ansbach, Queen-Consort of George the Second, and four times Queen-Regent. Yet she was by far the greatest of our Queens-Consort, and wielded more authority over political affairs than any of our Queens-Regnant with the exception of Elizabeth, and, in quite another sense, Victoria. The ten years of George the Second's reign until her death would be more properly called "The Reign of Queen Caroline," since for that period Caroline governed England with Walpole. And during those years the great principles of civil and religious liberty, which were then bound up with the maintenance of the Hanoverian dynasty, were firmly established in England.

Therefore no apology is needed for attempting to portray the life of this remarkable princess, and endeavouring to give some idea of the influence

which she exercised in her day and upon her generation. The latter part of Caroline's life is covered to some extent by Lord Hervey's Memoirs, and we get glimpses of her also in Horace Walpole's works and in contemporary letters. But Lord Hervey's Memoirs do not begin until Caroline became Queen, and though he enjoyed exceptional facilities of observation, he wrote with an obvious bias, and often imputed to the Queen motives and sentiments which were his rather than hers, and used her as the mouthpiece of his own prejudices and personal animosities.

Of Queen Caroline's life before she came to England nothing, or comparatively nothing, has hitherto been known,[1] and very little has been written of the difficult part which she played as Princess of Wales throughout the reign of George the First. On Caroline's early years this book may claim to throw fresh light. By kind permission of the Prussian authorities I am able to publish sundry documents from the Hanoverian Archives which have never before been given to the world, more especially those which pertain to the betrothal and marriage of the princess. The hitherto unpublished despatches of Poley, Howe and D'Alais, English envoys at Hanover, 1705-14,

[1] Dr. A. W. Ward's sketch of Caroline of Ansbach in the *Dictionary of National Biography* contains some facts concerning this period of her life, but they are necessarily brief.

give fresh information concerning the Hanoverian Court at that period, and the despatches of Bromley, Harley and Clarendon, written during the eventful year 1714, show the strained relations which existed between Queen Anne and her Hanoverian cousins on the eve of the Elector of Hanover's accession to the English throne.

In order to make this book as complete as possible I have visited Ansbach, where Caroline was born, Berlin, the scene of her girlhood, and Hanover, where she spent her early married years. I have searched the Archives in all these places, and have further examined the records in the State Paper Office, London, and the Manuscript Department of the British Museum. A list of these, and of other authorities quoted herein, published and unpublished, will be found at the end of this book.

In *The Love of an Uncrowned Queen* (Sophie Dorothea of Celle, Consort of George the First) I gave a description of the Courts of Hanover and Celle until the death of the first Elector of Hanover, Ernest Augustus. This book continues those studies of the Court of Hanover at a later period. It brings the Electoral family over to England and sketches the Courts of George the First and George the Second until the death of Queen Caroline. The influence which Caroline wielded throughout that troublous time, and the part she played in maintaining the Hanoverian dynasty upon the throne of England,

have never been fully recognised. George the First and George the Second were not popular princes; it would be idle to pretend that they were. But Caroline's gracious and dignified personality, her lofty ideals and pure life did much to counteract the unpopularity of her husband and father-in-law, and redeem the early Georgian era from utter grossness. She was rightly called by her contemporaries "The Illustrious". If this book helps to do tardy justice to the memory of a great Queen and good woman it will not have been written in vain.

W. H. WILKINS.

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BOOK I.

ELECTORAL PRINCESS OF HANOVER.

CHAPTER I.

ANSBACH AND ITS MARGRAVES.

1683–1696.

WILHELMINA CAROLINE, Princess of Brandenburg-Ansbach, known to history as "Caroline of Ansbach," Queen-Consort of King George the Second of Great Britain and Ireland, and sometime Queen-Regent, was born in the palace of Ansbach, a little town in South Germany, on March 1st, 1683. It was a year memorable in the annals of English history as the one in which Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney were brought to the block, who by their blood strengthened the long struggle against the Stuarts which culminated in the accession of the House of Hanover. The same year, seven months later, on October 30th, the ill-fated Sophie Dorothea of Celle, consort of George the First, gave birth to a son at Hanover, George Augustus, who twenty-two years later was destined to take Caroline of Ansbach to wife, and in fulness of time to ascend the throne of England.

The Margraves of Brandenburg-Ansbach were far from wealthy, but the palace wherein the little princess first opened her eyes to the light was one

of the finest in Germany, quite out of proportion to the fortunes of the petty principality. It was a vast building, four storeys high, built in the form of a square, with a cloistered courtyard, and an ornate façade to the west. Yet large as it was, it did not suit the splendour-loving Margraves of later generations, and the palace as it stands to-day, with its twenty-two state apartments, each more magnificent than the other, is a veritable treasure-house of baroque and rococo art. Some of the interior decoration is very florid and in doubtful taste; the ceiling of the great hall, for instance, depicts the apotheosis of the Margrave Karl the Wild; the four corners respectively represent the feast of the Bacchante, music, painting and architecture, and in the centre is a colossal figure of the Margrave, in classical attire, clasping Venus in his arms. The dining-hall is also gorgeous, with imitation marbles, crystal chandeliers, and a gilded gallery, wherefrom the minstrels were wont to discourse sweet music to the diners. The porcelain saloon, the walls lined with exquisite porcelain, is a gem of its kind, and the picture gallery contains many portraits of the Hohenzollerns. But the most interesting room is that known as "Queen Caroline's apartment," in which the future Queen of England was born; it was occupied by her during her visits to Ansbach until her marriage. This room is left much as it was in Caroline's day, and a canopy of faded green silk still marks the place where the bed stood in which she was born.

The town of Ansbach has changed but little

since the seventeenth century, far less than the palace, which successive Margraves have improved almost out of recognition. Unlike Würzburg and Nuremberg, cities comparatively near, Ansbach has not progressed; it has rather gone backward, for since the last Margrave, Alexander, sold his heritage in 1791, there has not been a court at Ansbach.[1] A sign of its vanished glories may be seen in the principal hotel of the place, formerly the residence of the Court Chamberlain, a fine house with frescoed ceilings, wide oak staircase, and spacious court-yard. The Hofgarten remains the same, a large park, with a double avenue of limes and oaks, beneath which Caroline must often have played when a girl. The high-pitched roofs and narrow irregular streets of the town still breathe the spirit of mediævalism, but the old-time glory has departed from Ansbach, and the wave of modern progress has scarcely touched it. The little town, surrounded with low-lying meadows, wears an aspect inexpressibly dreary and forsaken.

[1] The last of the Margraves of Brandenburg-Ansbach, Christian Frederick Charles Alexander, was born at Ansbach in 1736. He was the nephew of Queen Caroline, and married first a princess of Saxe-Coburg, and secondly the Countess of Craven (*née* Lady Elizabeth Berkeley), who called herself the "Margravine of Ansbach and Princess Berkeley". Having no heirs he sold his Margravate to the King of Prussia in 1791, and came to live in England with his second wife. He bought Brandenburg House, and was very beneficent and fond of sport, being well known on the turf. He died at a ripe old age in the reign of George IV. In 1806 Ansbach was transferred by Napoleon from Prussia to Bavaria, an act which was confirmed by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and with Bavaria it has since remained. Occasionally some members of the Bavarian royal family visit Ansbach and stay at the palace, but it has long ceased to be a princely residence.

The honest burghers of Ansbach, who took a personal interest in the domestic affairs of their Margraves, feeling that as they prospered they would prosper with them, could not, in their most ambitious moments, have imagined the exalted destiny which awaited the little princess who was born in the palace on that March morning. The princesses of Ansbach had not in the past made brilliant alliances, and there is no record of any one of them having married into a royal house. They were content to wed the margraves, the burgraves, the landgraves, and the princelets who offered themselves, to bear them children, and to die, without contributing any particular brilliancy to the history of their house.

The margravate of Ansbach was one of the petty German princedoms which had succeeded in weathering the storm and stress of the Middle Ages. At the time of Caroline's birth, any importance Ansbach might have possessed to the outer world arose from its connection with the Brandenburgs and Hohenzollerns, of which connection the later Margraves of Ansbach were alternately proud and jealous. Ansbach can, with reason, claim to be the cradle of the Hohenzollern kingdom. For nearly five hundred years (from 1331 to 1806) the princedom of Ansbach belonged to the Hohenzollerns, and a succession of the greatest events of Prussian history arose from the union of Prussia and Brandenburg and the margravate of Ansbach. It is not certain how, or when, the link began. But out of

the mist of ages emerges the fact, that when the Burgrave Frederick V. divided his possessions into the Oberland and Unterland, or Highlands and Lowlands, Ansbach was raised to the dignity of capital of the Lowland princedom, and a castle was built. The Margrave Albert the Great, a son of the Elector Frederick the First of Brandenburg, set up his court at Ansbach, decreeing that it should remain the seat of government for all time. Albert the Great's court was more splendid and princely than any in Germany; he enlarged the already beautiful castle, he kept much company and held brilliant tournaments, and he founded the famous order of the Knights of the Swan. The high altar, elaborately carved and painted, of the old Gothic church of St. Gumbertus in Ansbach remains to this day a monument of his munificence, and on the walls of the chancel are the escutcheons of the Knights of the Swan, and from the roof hang down the tattered banners of the Margraves.

The succeeding Margraves do not call for any special notice; after the fashion of German princes of that time, they spent most of their days in hunting, and their nights in carousing. They were distinguished from their neighbours only by their more peaceful proclivities. Two names come to us out of oblivion, George the Pious, who introduced the Reformation into Franconia, and George Frederick, who was guardian to the mad Duke Albert Frederick of Prussia, and who consequently managed Prussian affairs from Ansbach. With his

death in 1602 the elder branch of the Margraves expired.

Caroline's father, the Margrave John Frederick, was of the younger branch, and succeeded to the margravate in 1667. John Frederick was a worthy man, who confined his ambitions solely to promoting the prosperity of his princedom, and concerned himself with little outside it. When his first wife died, he married secondly, and rather late in life, Eleanor Erdmuthe Louisa, daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Eisenach, a princess many years his junior, by whom he had two children, a son, William Frederick, and a daughter, Caroline, the subject of this book. There is a picture of Caroline's parents in one of the state rooms of the castle, which depicts her father as a full-faced, portly man, with a brown wig, clasping the hand of a plump, highly-coloured young woman, with auburn hair, and large blue eyes. It is easy to see that Caroline derived her good looks from her mother. Her father died in 1686, and was succeeded by his son, George Frederick, who was the offspring of the first marriage.

As the Margrave George Frederick was a lad of fourteen years of age at the time of his father's death, the Elector Frederick the Third of Brandenburg acted as his guardian, and for the next seven years Ansbach was under the rule of a minor. As the minor was her stepson, who had never shown any affection for his stepmother or her children, the position of the widowed Margravine Eleanor was not a pleasant one. She was friendly with the Elector

THE CASTLE OF ANSBACH.

and Electress of Brandenburg, and looked to them for support, and on the eve of her stepson's majority she went to Berlin on a long visit, taking with her the little Princess Caroline, and leaving behind at Ansbach her son, William Frederick, who was heir-presumptive to the margravate. The visit was eventful, for during it Eleanor became betrothed to the Elector of Saxony, John George the Fourth.

The betrothal arose directly out of the newly formed alliance between the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony. At the time of his meeting with the young Margravine Eleanor the Elector of Saxony was only twenty-five years of age. Nature had endowed him with considerable talents and great bodily strength, though a blow on the head had weakened his mental powers, and his manhood did not fulfil the promise of his youth. Before he succeeded to the electorate of Saxony he had conceived a violent passion for Magdalen Sybil von Rœhlitz, the daughter of a colonel of the Saxon guard, a brunette of surpassing beauty, but so ignorant that her mother had to write her love letters for her. Magdalen gained complete sway over the young Elector, and she, in her turn, was the tool of her ambitious and intriguing mother. The Elector endowed his favourite with great wealth, gave her a palace and lands, surrounded her with a little court, and honoured her as though she were his consort. The high Saxon officials refused to bow down to the mistress, more especially as she was said to be in the pay of the Emperor of Austria,

whereas the popular policy in Saxony at that time was to lean towards Brandenburg.

The Elector of Brandenburg and his consort the Electress Sophie Charlotte came to Torgau in 1692 to strengthen the alliance between the electorates. The two Electors formed a new order to commemorate the *entente*, which was called the "Order of the Golden Bracelet". The Saxon Ministers hoped by this friendship to draw their Elector from the toils of his mistress and of Austria, and they persuaded him to pay a return visit to the Court of Berlin. While there the Elector of Saxony met the young widow the Margravine Eleanor, and became betrothed to her, to the great joy of the Elector and Electress of Brandenburg. The wedding was arranged to take place a little later at Leipzig, and for a time everything went smoothly; it seemed that the power of the mistress was broken, and she would have to retire. But when the Elector of Brandenburg and the Electress Sophie Charlotte accompanied the Margravine Eleanor to Leipzig for the wedding, they found the Elector of Saxony in quite another frame of mind, and he insulted his future wife by receiving her in company with his mistress. The negotiations had to begin all over again, but after a great deal of unpleasantness and many delays, the Elector of Saxony married, very ungraciously and manifestly under protest, the unfortunate Eleanor.

The Elector of Saxony's dislike to his wife, and

his reluctance to live with her, had been so marked even before marriage, that many wondered why the Margravine was so foolish as to enter upon a union which held out so slender a promise of happiness. But in truth she had not much choice; she had very little dower, she was anxious to find a home for herself and her daughter Caroline, and she was largely dependent on the Elector of Brandenburg's goodwill; she was, in short, the puppet of a political intrigue. She returned with the Elector of Saxony to Dresden, where her troubles immediately began. The mistress had now been promoted to the rank of a countess. The Electress's interests were with Brandenburg, and the Countess's with Vienna, and, apart from their domestic rivalries, their political differences soon led to friction. The Elector openly slighted and neglected his wife, and things went from bad to worse at the Saxon Court; so much so, that the state of morals and manners threatened to culminate in open bigamy. The Countess von Röohlitz, prompted by her mother, declared her intention of becoming the wife of the Elector though he was married already, and though she could not take the title of Electress, and the Elector supported her in this extraordinary demand. He gave her a written promise of marriage, and caused pamphlets to be circulated in defence of polygamy. It was vain for the Electress to protest; her life was in danger, attempts were made to poison her, and at last she was compelled to withdraw from the Court of Dresden to the dower-house of Pretsch,

taking her daughter Caroline with her. The mistress had won all along the line, but in the supreme hour of her triumph she was struck down by small-pox and died after a brief illness. The Elector, who was half-crazed with grief, would not leave her bedside during the whole of her illness. He, too, caught the disease, and died eleven days later. He was succeeded by his brother, Augustus Frederick, better known as "Augustus the Strong," and Eleanor became the Electress-dowager of Saxony.

In the autumn of the same year (1694) the Elector and Electress of Brandenburg paid a visit to the Electress Eleanor, whose health had broken down, and assured her of their support and affection, as indeed they ought to have done, considering that they were largely the cause of her troubles. At the same time the Elector and Electress promised to look after the interests of the little Princess Caroline, and to treat her as though she were their own daughter.

The next two years were spent by the young princess with her mother at Pretsch. It was a beautiful spot, surrounded by woods and looking down the fertile valley of the Elbe, and hard by was the little town of Wittenberg, one of the cradles of the Reformation. Luther and Melancthon lived at Wittenberg; their houses are still shown, and it was here that Luther publicly burned the Papal bull; an oak tree marks the spot. Caroline must often have visited Wittenberg; she was about twelve years of age at this time, and advanced beyond her years,

and it may be that much of the sturdy Protestantism of her later life was due to her early associations with the home of Luther and Melanchthon.

In 1696 Caroline was left an orphan by the death of her mother, and was placed under the care of her guardians, the Elector and Electress of Brandenburg, at Berlin.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURT OF BERLIN.

1696–1705.

THE Court of Berlin, where Caroline was to spend the most impressionable years of her life, was queened over at this time by one of the most intellectual and gifted princesses in Europe. Sophie Charlotte, Electress of Brandenburg, who in 1701, on her husband's assumption of the regal dignity, became first Queen of Prussia, was the daughter of that remarkable woman, the Electress Sophia of Hanover, and granddaughter of the gifted and beautiful Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James the First of England. These three princesses—grandmother, mother and daughter—formed a trinity of wonderful women.

Like her mother and grandmother, Sophie Charlotte inherited many traits from her Stuart ancestors; Mary's wit and passion, James the First's love of metaphysical and theological disputations, were reproduced in her, and she possessed to no small degree the beauty, dignity and personal charm characteristic of the race, which even the infusion of sluggish German blood could not mar. Her mother

had carefully trained her with a view to her making a great match some day; she was an accomplished musician, and a great linguist, speaking French, English and Italian as fluently as her native tongue, perhaps more so. She had read much and widely, an unusual thing among German princesses of that age. Sophie Charlotte's religious education was hardly on a level with her secular one, as the Electress Sophia, in accordance with her policy of making all considerations subservient to her daughter's future advancement, decided to bring her up with an open mind in matters of religion and in the profession of no faith, so that she might be eligible to marry the most promising prince who presented himself, whether he were Catholic or Protestant. As a courtly biographer put it: "She (Sophie Charlotte) refrained from any open confession of faith until her marriage, for reasons of prudence and state, because only then would she be able to judge which religion would suit best her condition of life".

Despite this theological complaisance, several eligible matches projected with Roman Catholic princes fell through, and the young princess's religion was finally settled on the Protestant side, for when the Electoral Prince of Brandenburg, son of the Great Elector, came forward as a suitor, Sophia eagerly accepted him for her daughter, notwithstanding that he was a widower, twelve years older than his bride, deformed, and of anything but an amiable reputation. These drawbacks were trifles compared with the fact that he was heir to

the most powerful electorate of North Germany. The wedding took place at Hanover in September, 1684, and the bride and bridegroom made their state entry into Berlin two months afterwards. A few years later Sophie Charlotte gave birth to a son, Frederick William, who was destined to become the second King of Prussia and the father of Frederick the Great. Four years later the Great Elector died; and with her husband's accession she became the reigning Electress of Brandenburg and later Queen of Prussia.

The salient points of Sophie Charlotte's character now made themselves manifest. The Court of Berlin was a brilliant one, and modelled on that of the King of France, for the King of Prussia refused to dispense with any detail of pomp or ceremony, holding, like the Grand Monarque, that a splendid and stately court was the outward and visible sign of a prince's power and greatness. He had a passion for display, and would spend hours debating the most trivial points of court etiquette. This was weariness of the soul to the Queen, for she cared nothing for the pomp and circumstance of sovereignty. She was careful to discharge her ceremonial duties, but she did so in the spirit of magnificent indifference. "Leibniz talked to me to-day of the infinitely little," she wrote once to her friend and confidante, Marie von Pöllnitz. "*Mon Dieu*, as if I did not know enough about that." The young Queen had arrived at a great position, but her heart was empty; she tolerated her husband,

but she felt towards him nothing warmer than a half-contemptuous liking. The King, on his part, was proud of his beautiful and talented consort, though he was rather afraid of her. It would have been easy for Sophie Charlotte, had she been so minded, to have gained great influence over her husband, and to have governed Brandenburg and Prussia through him, but though her intellect was masculine in its calibre, unlike her mother, she had no love of domination, and cared not to meddle with affairs of state. These things were to her but vanity, and she preferred rather to live a life of intellectual contemplation and philosophic calm ; the scientific discoveries of Newton were more to her than kingdoms, and the latest theory of Leibniz than all the pomp and circumstance of the court.

The King made her a present of the château of Lützenburg, later called after her Charlottenburg, just outside Berlin, and here she was able to gratify her love of art and beautiful things to the utmost. The gardens were laid out after the plan of Versailles, by Le Nôtre, with terraces, statues and fountains. Magnificent pictures, beautiful carpets, rarest furniture of inlaid ebony and ivory, porcelain and crystal, were stored in this lordly pleasure-house, and made it a palace of luxury and art. The King thought nothing too costly or magnificent for his Queen, though he did not follow her in her literary and philosophic bent, and Lützenburg became famous throughout Europe, not only for its splendour, for there were many palaces more

splendid, but because it was the chosen home of its beautiful mistress, and the meeting-place of all the talents. At Lützenburg, surrounded by a special circle of intellectual friends, the Queen enjoyed the free interchange of ideas, and discussed all things without restraint; wit and talent, and not wealth and rank, gave the *entrée* there. At Lützenburg she held receptions on certain evenings in the week, and on these occasions all trammels of court etiquette were laid aside, and everything was conducted without ostentation or ceremony. Intellectual conversations, the reading of great books, learned discussions, and, for occasional relaxation, music and theatricals, often kept the company late into the night at Lützenburg, and it frequently happened that some of the courtiers went straight from one of the Queen's entertainments to attend the King's levée, for he rose at four o'clock in the morning. To these reunions came not only the most beautiful and gifted ladies of the court, but learned men from every country in Europe, philosophers, theologians, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, representatives of literature, science and art, besides a number of French refugees, who did not appear at court in the ordinary way. Since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Berlin had become a rallying-place for Huguenots, many of them men of intellectual eminence and noble birth, who were banished from their native land. They were made especially welcome at Lützenburg, where everything was French rather than German. At Sophie Charlotte's re-

unions French only was spoken, and so elegant were the appointments, so perfect was the taste, so refined and courteous were the manners, so brilliant the wit and conversation, that one of the most celebrated of the Huguenot nobility declared that he felt himself once again at Versailles, and asked whether the Queen of Prussia could really speak German.

To Lützenburg came the eloquent Huguenot preacher, Beausobre; Vota, the celebrated Jesuit and Roman Catholic controversialist; Toland, the English freethinker; Papendorf, the historian; Handel, the great musician, when he was a boy; and last and among the greatest, the famous Leibniz. Hither came often, too, on many a long visit, the Electress Sophia of Hanover, "the merry *débonnaire* princess of Germany," who, like her daughter, delighted in theological polemics, and philosophic speculations. Sophie Charlotte's principles were exceedingly liberal, so much so that she became known as "the Republican Queen," and her early religious training, or rather the lack of it, was very noticeable in the trend of thought she gave to her gatherings. She would take nothing for granted, she submitted everything to the tribunal of reason; her eager and active spirit was always seeking to know the truth, even "the why of the why," as Leibniz grumbled once. Her mother, the Electress Sophia, would seem to have been a rationalist, with a stong dash of Calvinism. Sophie Charlotte went a step farther; she was nothing of a Calvinist, but rather leant to

the theories of Descartes. "My mother is a clever woman, but a bad Christian," said her son once, and that was true if he meant a dogmatic Christian, though Leibniz had a theory for reconciling Christianity and reason, which especially commended itself to her. She took a keen interest in theological polemics, and whenever any clever Jesuit came her way, she delighted in nothing so much as to get him to expound his views, and then put up one of her chaplains to answer him. In this way she set the Jesuit Vota disputing with the Protestant Brensenius, and the orthodox Huguenot Beausobre with the freethinking sceptic Toland. Nor were these arguments confined to theological subjects; scientific, philosophic and social questions—everything, in short, came within the debatable ground, and on one occasion we hear of a long and animated argument on the question whether marriage was, or was not, ordained for the procreation of children! The Queen presided over all these intellectual tournaments, throwing in a suggestion here or raising a doubt there; she was always able to draw the best out of every one, and thanks to her tact and amiability, the disputes on thorny questions were invariably conducted without unpleasantness.

This was the home in which Caroline spent the greater part of nine years, and we have dwelt upon it because the impressions she received and the opinions she formed at Lützenburg, during her girlhood influenced her in after years. The King of Prussia was Caroline's guardian, and after

LÜTZENBURG (CHARLOTTENBURG).

her mother's death, Sophie Charlotte assumed a mother's place to the little princess, who had now become an orphan and friendless indeed. Her step-brother was ruling at Ansbach, and Caroline was not very welcome there; indeed she was looked upon rather as an encumbrance than otherwise, and the only thing to be done was to marry her off as quickly as possible. There seems to have been some idea of betrothing her, when she was a mere child, to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, but she could hardly have been in love with him, as Horace Walpole relates, for the Duke married some one else when Caroline was only thirteen years of age.

Sophie Charlotte caused her adopted daughter to be thoroughly educated, and carefully trained in the accomplishments necessary to her position. Caroline's quickness and natural ability early made themselves manifest. Sophie Charlotte had no daughter of her own, and her heart went out to the young Princess of Ansbach, who returned her love fourfold, and looked up to her with something akin to adoration. Her admiration led to a remarkable likeness between the two in speech and gesture; nor did the likeness end here. Caroline was early admitted to the reunions at Lützenburg, and permitted to listen to the frank and free discussions which took place there. Such a training, though it might shake her beliefs, could not fail to sharpen her wits and enlarge her knowledge, and there is abundant evidence to show that in later life she adopted

Sophie Charlotte's views, not only in ethics and philosophy, but in conduct and morals. But she was more practical and less transcendental than the Queen of Prussia, and, like the Electress Sophia, she loved power, and took a keen interest in political affairs.

In this manner Caroline's girlhood passed. We may picture her walking up and down the garden walks and terraces of Lützenburg hearing Leibniz expound his philosophy, or sitting with the Queen of Prussia on her favourite seat under the limes discussing with her "the why of the why". She was the Queen's constant companion and joy, and when, as it sometimes happened, she was obliged to leave Berlin for a while to pay a visit to her brother at Ansbach, Sophie Charlotte declared she found Lützenburg "a desert".

Leibniz, Sophie Charlotte's chosen guide, philosopher and friend, is worthy of more than passing notice, since his influence over the Princess Caroline was second only to that of the Queen of Prussia herself. In Caroline's youth, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz was a prominent figure at Berlin, whither he frequently journeyed from Hanover. He was one of the most learned men of his time, almost equally eminent as a philosopher, mathematician and man of affairs. He was born in 1646 at Leipzig, and after a distinguished university career at Jena and Altdorf, he entered the service of the Elector-Archbishop of Mainz, and, as he possessed the pen of a ready writer, he was em-

ployed by him to advance his schemes. The Archbishop later sent him to Paris, nominally with a scheme he had evolved for the re-conquest of Egypt, really with the hope of distracting Louis the Fourteenth's attention from German affairs, so that Leibniz went in a dual capacity, as a diplomatist and as an author. In Paris the young philosopher became acquainted with Arnauld and Malebranche. From Paris he went to London, where he met Newton, Oldenburg and Boyle. His intimacy with these distinguished men stimulated his interest in mathematics. In 1676, when he was thirty years of age, Leibniz quitted the service of Mainz and entered that of Hanover. For the next forty years his headquarters were at Hanover, where he had charge of the archives, and worked also at politics, labouring unceasingly with his pen to promote the aggrandisement of the House of Hanover, especially to obtain for it the electoral dignity. Leibniz's work threw him much in contact with the Electress Sophia, with whom he became a trusted and confidential friend, and whose wide views were largely coloured by his liberal philosophy.

Leibniz had a positive passion for work, and in these, the most active years of his life, he not only laboured at political affairs, but worked hard at philosophy and mathematics, turning out book after book with amazing rapidity. At the suggestion of the Electress Sophia, he concerned himself with theology too, and strove at one time to promote the reunion of the Catholic and Protestant creeds,

his principal correspondent being Bossuet. The English Act of Parliament, vesting the succession to the throne of England in the Electress Sophia and the heirs of her body, *being Protestant*, put a summary stop to these labours. Henceforth there was no more coquetting with Roman Catholicism at Hanover. The Electress Sophia, Calvinist though she was, affected to manifest an interest in the Church of England, and especially favoured the English Protestant Nonconformists.

To consult archives for his history of the Brunswick-Lüneburg family, which he had been commanded to write, Leibniz travelled to Munich, Vienna, Rome and other cities. At Rome, the Pope, impressed by his great learning and controversial ability, offered him the custodianship of the Vatican library, if he would become a Roman Catholic, but Leibniz declined the offer. Apart from the fact that it involved submission to the Roman Church, it did not offer him a sufficiently wide field for his ambition. It is impossible to withhold some pity from this great scholar. He was one of those who put their trust in princes; he was greedy of money, honours and worldly fame; he loved the atmosphere of courts, and to have the ear of those who sit in high places, and so he deliberately prostituted his giant brain to writing panegyrics of the princes of paltry dukedoms, when he might have employed it to working out some of the greatest problems that interest mankind.

His worldly prospects at this time largely depended on the Queen of Prussia. Sophie Charlotte had known him at Hanover, and she invited him to Lützenburg. Through his influence she induced the King of Prussia to found the Academy of Science in Berlin, and to make Leibniz its first president. At his suggestion also, similar societies were founded in St. Petersburg, Dresden and Vienna, under the immediate patronage of the reigning monarchs, who were thus able to pose as patrons of the arts and sciences. Leibniz received honours from all of them, and the Emperor created him a baron of the empire.

Leibniz often met the Princess of Ansbach at the Queen of Prussia's reunions, and he noted how high she stood in the favour of his royal mistress. He became attracted to her by her wit and conversation, which were unusual in a princess of her years. He spoke of her in glowing terms to the Electress Sophia, who later made acquaintance with the young princess at Berlin, and she, too, was charmed with her talents and beauty. Leibniz, who was much at Berlin in those days, kept his venerable mistress at Hanover acquainted with the movements of the princess. We find him, for instance, writing to tell the Electress that Caroline had returned to Berlin after a brief visit to Ansbach, and of the Queen's pleasure at seeing her again. The Electress Sophia replied from Herrenhausen, desiring him to assure Caroline of her affection, and adding, "If it depended on me, I would have her kidnapped, and keep her always here". This seems to show that,

even at this early date, Sophia had it in her mind that she would like Caroline to marry her grandson, George Augustus.

In the autumn of 1704 the Electress Sophia paid a long visit to her beloved daughter, and spent two months with her at Lützenburg. The King of Prussia had great respect for his mother-in-law; she agreed with him in his love of pageantry, and, like him, was a great stickler for points of etiquette. But she had a larger mind, and was not content with the mere show of sovereignty: she loved the substance—domination and power. The Queen of Prussia received her mother with every demonstration of joy, and the festivities of Lützenburg were set going in her honour. Leibniz and Beausobre were there, and many intellectual tournaments took place. The Princess Caroline was there too, whom Sophia observed with especial interest. Caroline was now in her twenty-first year, and had blossomed into lovely womanhood; her features were regular, she had abundant fair hair, large blue eyes, a tall and supple figure and a stately bearing. The fame of her beauty and high qualities had travelled through Europe. True she was dowerless, the orphan daughter of a petty prince of no importance, but her guardian was the King of Prussia, and she was known to be the adopted daughter of his Queen. Thus it came about that her hand was sought by some of the most powerful princes in Europe, notably by the Archduke Charles, titular King of Spain, and heir to the Emperor, whom he later succeeded.

The idea of this marriage had long been in the air, but in 1704 it took definite shape, and the Elector Palatine, who was interested in the matter from political reasons, solicited Caroline's hand for the Archduke. Negotiations were proceeding while the Electress Sophia was at Lützenburg. We find Leibniz writing from there:—

"Apparently the Electress remains here until November, and will stay as long as the Queen is here. Two young princesses, the hereditary Princess of Cassel and the Princess of Ansbach, are also here, and I heard them sing the other night, a little *divertimento musicale*, the latter taking the part of 'Night,' the former that of 'Aurora,' the equinox adjusting the difference. The Princess of Cassel sings very tunefully; the Princess of Ansbach has a wonderful voice. Every one predicts the Spanish crown for her, but she deserves something surer than that crown is at present, though it may become more important; besides, the King of Spain (the Archduke) is an amiable prince."[1]

The predictions were a little premature, for the Archduke's wooing did not progress satisfactorily. As Leibniz said, the prospects of the Spanish crown were somewhat unsettled, though they were sufficiently dazzling to tempt a less ambitious princess than Caroline, and she was always ambitious. Her heart was free, but if it had not been, she had well learned the lesson that hearts are the last things to

[1] Leibniz to State Minister du Cros, Lützenburg, 25th October, 1704.

be taken into account in state marriages. A more serious difficulty arose in the matter of religion. In order to marry the titular King of Spain it was necessary for Caroline to become a Roman Catholic, and this she could not make up her mind to do. Perhaps she had inherited the Protestant spirit of her famous ancestor, George the Pious; perhaps the influences of Wittenberg were strong upon her. She was certainly influenced by the liberal views of the Queen of Prussia and the arguments she had heard at the reunions at Lützenburg. She was all for liberty of conscience in matters of faith, and shrank from embracing a positive religion, and of all religions Roman Catholicism is the most positive. Besides, it would seem that, though indifferent to most forms of religion, she really disliked Roman Catholicism, and all through her life she was consistent in her objection to it. Her guardian, the King of Prussia, though a Protestant himself, could not sympathise with her scruples. In his view young princesses should adapt their religion to political exigencies, and so he made light of her objections, and urged her to marry the King of Spain. Her adopted mother, Sophie Charlotte, maintained a neutral attitude: she was loath to part with her, but she refused to express an opinion either way. But the Electress Sophia, who was nothing if not Protestant, since her English prospects were wholly dependent on her Protestantism, greatly desired Caroline as a wife for her grandson, George Augustus, and did all she could to influence

her against the match. She writes from Lützenburg: "Our beautiful Princess of Ansbach has not yet resolved to change her religion. If she remains firm the marriage will not take place."[1]

Meanwhile Caroline, perhaps with an idea of gaining time, or forced into it, consented to receive the Jesuit priest Urban, and allow him to argue with her. The Electress Sophia again writes: "The dear Princess of Ansbach is being sadly worried. She has resolved to do nothing against her conscience, but Urban is very able, and can easily overcome the stupid Lutheran priests here. If I had my way, she would not be worried like this, and our court would be happy. But it seems that it is not God's will that I should be happy with her; we at Hanover shall hardly find any one better."[2] The result of these interviews was uncertain, for the Electress Sophia writes a few days later: "First the Princess of Ansbach says 'Yes' and then 'No'. First she says we Protestants have no valid priests, then that Catholics are idolatrous and accursed, and then again that our religion is the better. What the result will be I do not know. The Princess is shortly leaving here, and so it must be either 'Yes' or 'No'. When Urban comes to see the Princess the Bible lies between them on the table, and they argue at length. Of course, the

[1] The Electress Sophia to the Raugravine Louise, Lützenburg, 21st October, 1704.

[2] The Electress Sophia to the Raugravine Louise, Lützenburg, 27th October, 1704.

Jesuit, who has studied more, argues her down, and then the Princess weeps."[1]

The young Princess's tears lend a touch of pathos to this picture. Be it remembered that she was absolutely alone, poor, orphaned, dependent on the favour of her guardians, one of whom was strongly in favour of this match. If she consented, she would violate her conscience, it is true, but she would gain honour, riches and power, all of which she ardently desired. The powerful pressure of the King of Prussia, the most persuasive arguments of the Jesuit, and the subtle promptings of self-interest and ambition were all brought to bear on her. It says much for Caroline's strength of character that she did not yield, and shows that she was of no common mould. That she refused definitely is shown by the following letter which the Electress Sophia wrote on her return to Hanover to Leibniz, whom she had left behind her at Lützenburg: "Most people here applaud the Princess of Ansbach's decision, and I have told the Duke of Celle that he deserves her for his grandson. I think the Prince (George Augustus) likes the idea also, for in talking with him about her, he said, 'I am very glad that you desire her for me'. Count Platen (the Prime Minister), to whom I mentioned the matter, is not opposed, but does not wish it so much."[2]

[1] The Electress Sophia to the Raugravine Louise, Lützenburg, 1st November, 1704.

[2] The Electress Sophia to Leibniz, Hanover, 22nd November, 1704.

Leibniz had something to do with Caroline's decision, and he drafted the letter for her in which she declined further negotiations. The King of Prussia was angry, and roundly cursed Hanoverian interference, as he called it; indeed, he made things so uncomfortable that Caroline thought it advisable to leave Berlin for Ansbach until her guardian should become more amiable. Her step-brother was dead, and her own brother was now Margrave. From Ansbach we find her writing to Leibniz at Berlin:—

"I received your letter with the greatest pleasure, and am glad to think that I still retain your friendship and your remembrance. I much desire to show my gratitude for all the kindness you paid me at Lützenburg. I am delighted to hear from you that the Queen and the court regret my departure, but I am sad not to have the happiness of paying my *devoirs* to our incomparable Queen. I pray you on the next occasion assure her of my deep respect. I do not think the King of Spain is troubling himself any more about me. On the contrary, they are incensed at my disinclination to follow the advice of Father Urban. Every post brings me letters from that kind priest. I really think his persuasions contributed materially to the uncertainty I felt during those three months, from which I am now quite recovered. The Electress (Sophia) does me too much honour in remembering me; she has no more devoted servant than myself, and I understand her

pleasure in having the Crown Prince (of Prussia) at Hanover."[1]

The Crown Prince of Prussia, Frederick William, had spent a good deal of time at the Hanoverian Court when a boy. His grandmother, the Electress Sophia, had wished to educate him at Hanover with her other grandson, George Augustus, but Frederick William was of a quarrelsome disposition, and pummelled George Augustus so unmercifully that they had to be separated. Their hatred for one another lasted through life. Frederick William was a headstrong and violent youth, with ungovernable passions; even when a boy it was dangerous to thwart him in any way. The boy was father to the man. As the Crown Prince grew up, his mother had occasion to reproach him again and again for his unenviable qualities, among which avarice, rudeness and lack of consideration for others were prominent.

The Queen of Prussia would have liked Caroline as a wife for her son, but the King had other and more ambitious views. He was not, however, opposed to the idea, in case all his other plans fell through. Neither Caroline nor the Crown Prince had any inclination for each other, and the scheme never took any definite shape, though it might have done so had the Queen lived. Meanwhile it was resolved to send Frederick William on a tour of foreign travel, in the hope that a greater knowledge

[1] Princess Caroline of Ansbach to Leibniz, Ansbach, 28th December, 1704.

of the world would improve his manners and morals. The Queen felt the parting keenly, for she truly loved her son (her only child), and though indifferent about other matters, she was keenly practical in anything that concerned his interest. After he had gone there was found a sheet of notepaper on her writing-table at Lützenburg, on which she had drawn a heart and underneath had written the date and the words "*Il est parti*".

It is probable that this parting preyed upon the Queen of Prussia's health, which was never strong, and made her more anxious to visit her mother. In January, 1705, she set out for Hanover, notwithstanding the opposition of the King and the severity of the weather. The long journey was too much for her. At Magdeburg she broke down, and had to take to her bed; but she rallied, and again took the road. After she had reached Hanover she seemed to conquer her illness, a tumour in the throat, by sheer force of will. In a few days, however, dangerous symptoms developed, and she became rapidly worse. Doctors were called in, and it was soon recognised that there was no hope left.

When the news was broken to the Queen, with the greatest composure and without any fear of death she resigned herself to the inevitable. Her death-bed belongs to history. A great deal of conflicting testimony has gathered around her last hours, but probably the account given by Frederick the Great, who had exceptional opportunities of knowing the

truth, is a correct one. The French chaplain at Hanover, de la Bergerie, came to offer his ministrations, but she said to him: "Let me die without quarrelling with you. For twenty years I have devoted earnest study to religious questions; you can tell me nothing that I do not know already, and I die in peace." To her lady-in-waiting she exclaimed: "What a useless fuss and ceremony they will make over this poor body"; and when she saw that she was in tears, she said, "Why do you weep? Did you think I was immortal?" And again: "Do not pity me. I am at last going to satisfy my curiosity about the origin of things, which even Leibniz could never explain to me, to understand space, infinity, being and nothingness; and as for the King, my husband—well, I shall afford him the opportunity of giving me a magnificent funeral, and displaying all the pomp he loves so much." Her aged mother, broken down with grief, was ill in an adjoining room, and unable to come to her; but to her brothers, George Louis (afterwards George the First, King of England) and Ernest Augustus, she bade an affectionate farewell. The pastor reminded her tritely that kings and queens were mortal equally with other men. She answered, "*Je le sais bien*," and with a sigh expired.

Sophie Charlotte was in her thirty-seventh year when she died, and at her death a great light went out. She would have been a remarkable woman under any conditions; she was doubly remarkable when we remember her time and her environment.

SOPHIA CHARLOTTE, QUEEN OF PRUSSIA.

From the Original Portrait by Wiedman.

In her large brain and generous sympathies, her love of art and letters, and her desire to raise the intellectual life of those around her the first Queen of Prussia strongly resembled one of her successors who has recently passed away—the late Empress Frederick. She resembled her also in that during her lifetime she was often misrepresented and misunderstood, and her great qualities of head and heart were not fully appreciated until after her death.

CHAPTER III.

THE WOOING OF THE PRINCESS.

1705.

THE Queen of Prussia's death was one of the great sorrows of Caroline's life. She was at Ansbach when Sophie Charlotte died, slowly recovering from a low fever. The sad news from Hanover plunged her into the deepest grief, and seriously hindered her convalescence. Leibniz, who had also lost his best friend in the Queen, wrote to Caroline to express his grief and sympathy; he also took this opportunity to explain his views on the Divine scheme of things.

"Your Serene Highness," he writes, "having often done me the honour at Lützenburg of listening to my views on true piety, will allow me here to revert to them briefly.

"I am persuaded, not by light conjecture, that everything is ruled by a Being, whose power is supreme, and whose knowledge infinite and perfect. If, in this present state, we could understand the Divine scheme of things, we should see that everything is ordered for the best, not only generally but individually, for those who have a true love of

God and confidence in His goodness. The teachings of Scripture conform to reason when they say that all things work together for good to those who love God. Thus perfect love is consummated in the joy of finding perfection in the object beloved, and this is felt by those who recognise Divine perfection in all that it pleases God to do. If we had the power now to realise the marvellous beauty and harmony of things, we should reduce happiness to a science, and live in a state of perpetual blessedness. But since this beauty is hidden from our eyes, and we see around us a thousand sights that shock us, and cause temptation to the weak and ignorant, our love of God and our trust in His goodness are founded on faith, not yet lost in sight or verified by the senses.

"Herein, madam, may be found, broadly speaking, the three cardinal virtues of Christianity : faith, hope and love. Herein, too, may be found the essence of the piety which Christ taught—trust in the Supreme Reason, even where our reason fails without Divine grace to grasp its working, and although there may seem to be little reason in it. I have often discussed these broad principles with the late Queen She understood them well, and her wonderful insight enabled her to realise much that I was unable to explain. This resignation, this trust, this merging of a tranquil soul in its God, showed itself in all her words and actions to the last moment of her life." [1]

[1] Leibniz to the Princess Caroline of Ansbach, Hanover, 18th March, 1705.

Caroline's answer to this letter shows that she had not yet arrived at the heights of Leibniz's philosophy: "Heaven," she says, "jealous of our happiness, has taken away from us our adored and adorable Queen. The calamity has overwhelmed me with grief and sickness, and it is only the hope that I may soon follow her that consoles me. I pity you from the bottom of my heart, for her loss to you is irreparable. I pray the good God to add to the Electress Sophia's life the years that the Queen might have lived, and I beseech you to express my devotion to her."[1]

To add to Caroline's troubles, the Elector Palatine showed signs at this time of reviving his favourite project of marrying her to the King of Spain, notwithstanding her definite refusal the year before. He probably thought, as the death of Queen Sophie Charlotte had materially affected for the worse the position and prospects of her ward, that the young Princess could now be induced to reconsider her decision. The King of Prussia was of this opinion too, and his tone became threatening and peremptory; he had no objection to keeping Caroline as a possible bride for his son in the last resort, but it would suit his political schemes better to see her married to the future Emperor. But Caroline found an unexpected ally in her brother, the young Margrave of Ansbach, who resented, as much as he dared, the interference of the King of

[1] Letter of Princess Caroline to Leibniz, Ansbach, 2nd April, 1705.

Prussia, and told his sister that she was not to do violence to her convictions, and that she might make her home with him as long as she pleased. Thus fortified, Caroline stood firm in her resistance, though by so doing she refused the most brilliant match in Europe.

With the spring things grew brighter; Caroline could not mourn for ever, and thanks to a strong constitution, youth and health asserted themselves, and she quite recovered her beauty and her vivacity. The Ansbach burghers knew all about her refusal of the future Emperor, and they honoured her for her courage and firmness, and were proud of their beautiful young princess, whom the greatest prince in Europe had sued in vain. Caroline interested herself in many schemes of usefulness in her brother's principality, and went in and out among the people displaying those rare social gifts which stood her in good stead in later years. Perhaps this was the happiest period of her life, and though she was at Ansbach only for a short time, she always retained an affection for the place of her birth, and an interest in the fortunes of her family. Yet she must have felt the contrast between quiet little Ansbach and the brilliant circle at Berlin; her energetic and ambitious temperament was not one which could have long remained content with an equivocal position in a petty German Court, and she must have wondered what the future had in store for her.

Caroline was not destined to regret her refusal

of the Imperial diadem. "Providence," as Addison put it later, "kept a reward in store for such exalted virtue;" and her "pious firmness," as Burnet unctuously called her rejection of the future Emperor, "was not to go unrequited, even in this life".[1] In June, the fairest month of all the year at little Ansbach, when the trim palace garden was full of roses, and the lime trees in the Hofgarten were in fragrant bloom, the Electoral Prince George Augustus of Hanover came to see and woo the beautiful princess like the Prince Charming in the fairy tale. George Augustus was not exactly a Prince Charming either in appearance or character, but at this time he passed muster. He was a few months younger than Caroline, and though he was short in stature, he was well set up, and had inherited some of his mother's beauty, especially her large almond-shaped eyes. The court painters depict him as by no means an ill-looking youth, and the court scribes, after the manner of their kind, described him as a prince of the highest qualities, with a grace of bearing and charm of manner. Flatterers as well as detractors unite in declaring him to be possessed of physical courage, as daring and impulsive, and often prompted by his heart. George Augustus had his defects, as we shall see later; they developed as the years went on, but they were not on the surface now, and it was only the surface that the young Princess saw.

[1] Gay, in his *Epistle to a Lady*, also alludes to this incident:—

"The pomp of titles easy faith might shake,
She scorned an empire, for religion's sake"

The wooing of Caroline was full of romance and mystery; even the bare record of it, as related in the state papers and despatches of the day, cannot altogether keep these elements out. The Elector George of Hanover determined that his son should visit Ansbach in disguise, and, under a feigned name, see and converse with the Princess, so that he might find out if he could love her, if she were likely to love him, and whether she was really so beautiful and charming as rumour had described her. The Elector knew by bitter experience the misery of a state marriage between an ill-assorted husband and wife, and he determined to spare his son a similar fate. Extraordinary care was taken to preserve the Prince's *incognito*, and to prevent his mission being known before everything was settled. There was an additional reason for this secrecy, as the King of Prussia would certainly try to prevent the marriage if he got to know of it in time.

Prince George Augustus rode out of Hanover at night, no one knew whither, but his absence from the court was soon remarked, and the quidnuncs were all agog. The English Envoy at Hanover, Poley, writes home as follows:—

"Our Electoral Prince went out of town at about twelve o'clock at night, attended only by the Baron von Eltz (who had formerly been his governor and is one of these Ministers) and one valet-de-chambre. This journey is a mystery of which I know nothing, but it seems probable that he will make use of the Princess of Hesse's passing through Celle to view

incognito a Princess of that family who is thought to come with her. There is a Princess of Saxe-Zeith, also, said to be the most beautiful in Germany. . . . In what concerns the Prince's own inclination in this business, his Highness hath not hitherto appeared so much concerned for the character and beauty of any young lady he hath account of, as the Princess of Ansbach. The mystery of this journey at least will soon be discovered. There is in this court a real desire of marrying the prince very soon."[1]

Meanwhile George Augustus, in accordance with the Elector's plan, had arrived at Ansbach. He professed to be a young Hanoverian noble travelling for pleasure, who expected to meet at Nuremberg some travelling companions from Westphalia, but as they had failed to appear, he found Nuremberg dull, and came on to Ansbach to see the town and visit its court. He and his companion, Baron von Eltz, presented introductions from Count Platen, the Hanoverian Prime Minister, commending them to the good offices of the Margrave. They were received at the palace and treated with all hospitality; they were invited to supper, and joined the circle afterwards at music and cards. George Augustus, in the guise of a Hanoverian nobleman, was presented to the Princess Caroline, and conversed with her for some time. According to his subsequent declarations he was so much charmed with her that he fell in love at first sight. She far exceeded all that rumour

[1] Poley's Despatch, Hanover, 9th June, 1705.

had declared. It may be presumed that he kept his ardour in check, and Caroline had no idea who he was. But whether she had an inkling or not, she betrayed no sign, and played her part to perfection. After a few days' sojourn at Ansbach the young prince departed, apparently to Nuremberg to meet his friends, in reality to hasten back to Hanover to tell his father that he was very much in love. Here again we quote Poley:—

"The Prince Electoral is returned and gone to Herrenhausen. He was about two hours with the Elector alone, and the Elector's appearing afterwards in good humour at table makes it to be imagined that there hath nothing happened but what he is well pleased with. Some with whom I am acquainted are positively of opinion that his Highness hath been at Ansbach, and that he declared his design himself in person, and hath been very well received, and that we shall soon see some effects of it; others think it is a Princess of Hesse."[1]

But no explanation of the Prince's expedition was forthcoming, and the Elector went off to Pyrmont to take the waters, leaving the Hanoverian Court in mystification. The secret was well kept; even the Electress Sophia was not informed, notwithstanding that this was her darling scheme. The Elector had contempt for women's discretion; he often declared that he could not trust a woman's tongue, and he knew that his mother was a constant

[1] Poley's Despatch, Hanover, 19th June, 1705.

correspondent with the greatest gossip in Europe, her niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans.

Matters being thus far advanced at Hanover, Eltz was again despatched to Ansbach. "He hath disappeared secretly," writes the lynx-eyed Poley, who was still much mystified. When Eltz returned to Ansbach, he kept up his disguise and told the Margrave that he had just returned from Nuremberg, where he had left his young friend. The Elector of Hanover's secret instructions to Eltz, and the Envoy's letters to the Elector (preserved in the Hanoverian archives) explain what followed, and the whole of the negotiations at Ansbach. It will be well to quote them in full :—

The Elector of Hanover to Privy Councillor von Eltz.

"HANOVER, *June 17th*, 1705.

"Whereas, it is already known to our trusty Envoy, that our son, the Electoral Prince, has seen the Princess of Ansbach, and is seized with such an affection and desire for her, that he is most eager to marry her without delay: We therefore should gladly rejoice to see such a union take place, and hope that the Princess may be equally favourably disposed. It is necessary, however, that her inclinations be assured first of all, and, should she consent to this alliance, it is our wish that the marriage contracts may be agreed upon without unnecessary delay.

"We therefore instruct our Envoy to betake himself, secretly and *incognito*, to the Court of

Ansbach. On arriving there he must feign surprise that his friends from Westphalia, who had arranged to meet him at Nuremberg on their way to Italy, had not yet arrived. Moreover, he must say that the young friend who had accompanied him the last time he was at Ansbach having been unexpectedly called home, he, our Envoy, found the time of waiting so long at Nuremberg that he returned to Ansbach, and would consider it a special favour if he might be allowed to pass a few more days at that Court.

"Having made this explanation, our Envoy should seek an opportunity of conversing alone with the Princess, and should say to her privately, when no one else is within hearing, that he had matters of importance to bring before her notice, and certain proposals to make, which he hoped would not prove disagreeable to her. He must therefore beg her to name a convenient time and opportunity to grant him an interview alone, but in such a manner as to cause no comment. He should also ask her, particularly, not to confide to any one the request he had made, the more especially because the Princess would subsequently see that the matter was of so delicate a nature as to require absolute secrecy for the present.

"When our Envoy is admitted to the Princess, he must explain to her that the young friend who accompanied him on his last visit to the Court of Ansbach was our son, the Electoral Prince, who had been so much impressed with the reports of the

Princess's incomparable beauty and mental attributes that he arranged to appear *incognito*, and have the honour of seeing and speaking with the Princess without her knowing his electoral rank and station. As he had succeeded in doing this, and had found that the reports were more than verified, our son is so charmed and delighted with her that he would consider it the height of good fortune to obtain her for his wife, and has asked our permission to seek this end. As we, the Elector, have always held the Princess in highest esteem and repute, we are not a little rejoiced to hear that our son cherished these sentiments towards her, and we should be even more glad if he could attain the object of his mission.

"Our Envoy must then declare to the Princess who he himself is, and by whose authority he has come, and he must sound her as to whether she be free from all other engagements, and if so he must discover if her heart be inclined towards our son. Our Envoy, however, must mention, but not in such a way as to suggest that the Princess of Ansbach is a *pis aller* for our son, that this matter would have been broached sooner on our side, if negotiations for our son's marriage had not been going on in Sweden, as was perhaps known in Ansbach, the result of which had necessarily to be awaited. Besides we had previously to make sure whether the Princess of Ansbach was likely to entertain the King of Spain's suit.

"If the Princess should reply that she is engaged

to another, or if she should behave in such a way as to lead our Envoy to suppose that she was desirous of avoiding the proposal of marriage from our son, our Envoy is charged to beg the Princess not to make the slightest mention of the matter to any one, and, under pretext that he has received news that his travelling companions have at last reached Nuremberg, he is to take leave of the Court of Ansbach, and return hither at once as secretly as he left.

"But should the Princess, in answer to our Envoy's proposition, declare, as we hope she will, that she is free from any other matrimonial engagement, and is inclined to an alliance with our House, our Envoy will inquire of the Princess, first, whether she would agree to his having an audience with her brother, the Margrave, and then, on behalf of our son, he will ask her hand in marriage. Also, because this matter must be formally dealt with, and a contract of marriage drawn up, he must find out what trustees, persons well disposed towards the marriage, he shall ask the Margrave to nominate, or whether the Princess would prefer herself to nominate them. The Princess will probably require time to consider the matter, in which case our Envoy will request her to think over the question by herself. Should the Princess delay in coming to a decision, our Envoy, in the most polite and delicate manner possible, will remind her that he must guard in every way against the Princess having any kind of communication with the Court of Berlin until such time

as this project of marriage is so far established as to prevent any possibility of its being upset; and to this end our Envoy will most strongly urge that only trustworthy persons favourably disposed towards this marriage be employed in the drawing up of the contract. Our Envoy will point out that any communication on this subject with the Court of Berlin would only create difficulties and loss of time. Our Envoy knows full well that the sooner our son is married the better. It is, therefore, most important to prevent any whisper reaching Berlin, and to keep in ignorance all those persons who would surely speak against this marriage, and seek to delay it, in the hope of eventually preventing it altogether. Our Envoy can suggest to the Princess that an explanation could easily be given to the Court of Berlin later (with apologies for not having acquainted it before), to the effect that she was so hard pressed by our Envoy for a decision, she could not well refrain from accepting at once, the more especially as it was an offer she had no reason to refuse. Her brother, the Margrave, could say that he knew nothing of the matter until the Princess announced that she had chosen our son."

Privy Councillor von Eltz to the Elector of Hanover.

"ANSBACH, *June 23rd*, 1705.

"On arriving here yesterday evening I went at once to the Court, and was presented to the Margrave and her Highness the Princess, under the name of

'Steding,' by Court Marshal von Gerleheim. I was most graciously received by them both. The Princess commanded me to be shown to her private apartments, and gave me audience in her own chamber. There was no one else present, except at first Fräulein von Genninggen, who stood discreetly apart, and with her back turned to us; she afterwards, at my suggestion, left the room. I then took the opportunity to carry out the mission with which I had been graciously entrusted by your Electoral Highness. I asked first whether her Highness was free of all other matrimonial engagements, and in that event whether she was favourably disposed to the Electoral Prince's suit?

"Her Highness at first seemed to be surprised and agitated. But she soon composed herself, and said that I could rest assured that she was entirely free from any engagements, as the negotiations between herself and the King of Spain had been completely broken off. Nevertheless, she added, my proposition came to her very unexpectedly, as (I quote her own words) 'she had never flattered herself that any one in Hanover had so much as thought about her'. That they should have done so, she could only ascribe to the will of God and the goodness of your Electoral Highness, and she hoped that you would not find yourself deceived in the favourable opinion you had formed of her from what others had told you. This much, at least, she would admit, that she would infinitely prefer an alliance with your Electoral House to any other;

and she considered it particular good fortune to be able to form fresh and congenial ties to compensate for the loss she had suffered by the death of the high-souled Queen of Prussia, and of her own step-brother. In the meantime, as she was absolutely dependent on her brother, the present Margrave, she could not formally give her consent to my proposal until she had spoken with him on the subject. But she did not doubt that he would consider your Electoral Highness's request in a favourable light, and would willingly give his consent in all things as she wished.

"Having expressed my profound thanks to her Highness for her favourable reception of my proposal, I then strongly urged upon her the most absolute secrecy, especially with regard to the too early announcement of this betrothal to the Court of Berlin. Her Highness at once declared that this was the very request she herself had been on the point of making to me, as the King of Prussia took upon himself to such an extent to command her to do this, that and the other, that her brother and she were obliged to be very circumspect, and to be careful of everything they said and did. Her brother, the Margrave, would most certainly be discreet, and the Princess was glad that Privy Councillor von Breidow was even now going to Berlin to represent the Court of Ansbach at the funeral of the late Queen.[1] Her Highness also

[1] The Queen of Prussia was not buried until six months after her death, and her funeral, as she had anticipated, was conducted on a scale of great magnificence. Von Breidow was an Ansbach official in the pay of Prussia.

undertook to inquire of her brother what settlements she should ask for, and who should be entrusted with the drawing up of the marriage contract, at the same time remarking that she had complete trust in Councillor von Voit, who, although he had originally advised her to accept the proposal of the King of Spain, yet, when she could not make up her mind to change her religion, had not turned against her, and was still her friend, and deeply attached to her brother. In conclusion, her Highness said that it would be best for me to retain the name of Steding for the present, and to come to Court in that name whenever I wished to drive out with her. Thereupon, so as not to create remark by too long an interview, and also to be able to expedite this despatch, I returned to my lodging at once. To-morrow I shall repair to Court again and learn what his Highness the Margrave has to say, whereupon I shall not fail to send my report."

Privy Councillor von Eltz to the Elector of Hanover.

"ANSBACH, *June 25th*, 1705.

"As the Princess of Ansbach promised, and as I mentioned in my despatch of the day before yesterday, her Highness made known my mission to her brother, the Margrave, the same evening, and received his consent, which he gave with great pleasure. They thereupon sent a joint message by an express courier to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt begging him to be good enough to repair

hither without delay; the Princess asked the Landgrave to come in order that he might be an adviser to her and her brother, and help to determine the question of her appanage and her settlements. These will probably be easily settled. There is not likely to be any difference between the Princess and her brother on the question of settlements, except that he wishes to give up to her everything left to her by the will of the deceased Margrave, and she declines to accept so much from him.

"Meanwhile, though my credentials have not yet arrived, acting on the Princess's advice, I had a special audience with the Margrave, and thanked him for his favourable reply, urging at the same time despatch in the matter. Further, I asked that Councillor Voit might act as one of the trustees. To all these requests he replied most politely, and assured me that he considered your Electoral Highness's request as an honour to his House and a piece of good fortune to his family, and he was deeply obliged to your Electoral Highness for it, and would endeavour at all times to show your Electoral Highness devotion and respect.

"Court Councillor Serverit, who is here, and who was private secretary to the late Margrave, and is still intimate with the Princess, received a letter yesterday from Court Councillor Metsch, wherein he says he has been summoned by both the Emperor and the Elector Palatine, who have commissioned him to make a final representation on behalf of the King of Spain, and he therefore

must earnestly request Court Councillor Serverit to repair to some place, such as Nuremberg, where he could meet and confer with him. But her Highness, the Princess, ordered Court Councillor Serverit to reply by special courier to Court Councillor Metsch that it was not worth his trouble to journey to Nuremberg or anywhere else, as she held firmly to the resolution she had already formed, all the more as the matter was no longer *res integra.* Thus your Electoral Highness has chosen the right moment to send me here, not only on account of this message, but also because of the absence of Privy Councillor von Breidow; and if only the courier will bring me the necessary instructions and authorisation from your Electoral Highness with regard to the marriage contract, as everything is in readiness, the matter can be settled at once. I also hope that the Princess will not long delay her departure from Ansbach, and will not break her journey to Hanover anywhere but at Eisenach. It is true she told Councillor Voit, when at my suggestion he mentioned to her that I was pressed for time, that she had no coaches or appanage ready, and the Councillor also gave me to understand that the Margrave would need time to make proper arrangements for the journey. But I, on the other hand, pointed out that your Electoral Highness cared for none of these things, and needed nothing else but to see the Princess in person, and hoped as soon as possible to receive her. Whereupon the Councillor assured me that her Highness would

not take it amiss if I pressed the matter somewhat urgently, and that he would do all in his power to help me. I now only await the courier. . . . I have so much good to tell concerning the Princess's merits, beauty, understanding and manner that your Electoral Highness will take a real and sincere pleasure in hearing it."[1]

The courier from Hanover duly arrived at Ansbach bringing the Elector's warrant, which gave Eltz full powers to arrange the marriage contract and settle the matter of the impending alliance between "our well-beloved son, George Augustus, Duke and Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Lüneburg, and our well-beloved Princess Wilhelmina Caroline, Princess of Brandenburg in Prussia, of Magdeburg, Stettin and Pomerania, of Casuben and Wenden, also Duchess of Crossen in Silesia, Electress of Nuremberg, Princess of Halberstadt, Minden and Cannin, and Countess of Hohenzollern, etc., etc.," as Caroline was grandiloquently described. Her long string of titles contrasted with her lack of dowry, for she brought to her future consort nothing but her beauty and her talents, which, however, were more than enough.

The preliminaries being settled, Count Platen was told by the Elector, who was still at Pyrmont, to acquaint the Electress Dowager with what had been done. The Electress expressed her surprise that "the whole matter had been kept secret from

[1] These documents (in German) are preserved in the Royal Archives at Hanover. They have never before been published.

QUEEN CAROLINE'S ROOM IN THE CASTLE OF ANSBACH.

her," but she was so overjoyed at the realisation of her hopes that she waived her resentment at the lack of courtesy with which she had been treated.[1] As the "Heiress of Great Britain" the marriage of her grandson, who was in the direct line of succession to the English throne, was a matter in which she had certainly a right to be consulted. But as it all turned out exactly as she would have wished, she put aside her chagrin and prepared to give the bride a hearty welcome.

The betrothal soon became an open secret, and the Duke of Celle, George Augustus's maternal grandfather, was formally acquainted with the good news, and came to Hanover to offer his congratulations. Poley adds the following significant note: "During the Duke of Celle's being here, the Duchess of Celle goes to stay with her daughter, and probably to acquaint her with her son's marriage".[2] This daughter was the unfortunate wife of the Elector, Sophie Dorothea, the family skeleton of the House of Hanover, whom her husband had put away and kept a prisoner at Ahlden. This was the only notification of the marriage made to her, and she was not allowed to send a letter to her son or to his future wife.

A few days later the good news was publicly proclaimed. Poley writes: "On Sunday, the 26th,

[1] An account of this interview is given in a letter from the Count von Platen to the Elector of Hanover; Hanover, 9th July, 1705 (Hanover Archives.)

[2] Poley's Despatch, Hanover, 21st July, 1705.

just before dinner, the Elector declared that there was concluded a treaty of marriage between his son the Electoral Prince and the Princess of Ansbach, and the Prince received the compliments of the court upon it, and at dinner there were many healths drunk to his good success. So that the mystery is now at an end which hath hitherto been concealed with so much care. . . . The Prince's clothes are now making, and the comedians have an order to be in readiness to act their best plays, of which they have already given in a list, though it is thought the mourning for the Emperor may delay the wedding some weeks longer if the Prince's impatience does not make him willing to hasten it. The Electress told me on Sunday night that the Elector had left the Prince entirely to his own choice, and the Electress herself hath a very great kindness for her, and since her last visit to Berlin, the Princess of Ansbach hath been always talked of at this court as the most agreeable Princess in Germany."[1]

After this there was no long delay, and everything was done to hasten forward the marriage. The Princess of Ansbach only asked for time to make necessary preparations for departure, and agreed to waive all unnecessary ceremony. At Hanover it was settled that the Electoral Prince and Princess should have the apartments in the Leine Schloss formerly occupied by Sophie Dorothea of Celle when Electoral Princess, and the same

[1] Poley's Despatch, Hanover, 28th July, 1705.

household and establishment allotted to them—"nothing very great," remarks Poley.

The air was full of wedding preparations when the rejoicing was suddenly marred by the death of the aged Duke of Celle, who died of a chill caught hunting. The Princess of Ansbach, accompanied by her brother, the Margrave, had actually started on her journey to Hanover when the news of this untoward event reached her, and the Electoral Prince had gone to meet her half-way. As all arrangements were completed for the wedding, and delays were dangerous owing to the jealousy of the Courts of Vienna and Berlin, it was decided to suspend the mourning for the Duke of Celle for a few days, and to celebrate the marriage on the arrival of the bride.

George Augustus and Caroline were married quietly on September 2nd, 1705, in the chapel of the palace of Hanover. The only account of the marriage is to be found in Poley's despatch: "The Princess of Ansbach and the Margrave, her brother, arrived here, and were received with all the expressions of kindness and respect that could be desired. The marriage was solemnised the same evening after her coming, and yesterday there was a ball, and in the evening there will be a comedy for her entertainment, and there are the greatest appearances of entire satisfaction on all sides. The Court left off their mourning, and has appeared these three days in all the finery which the occasion requires, and the Marquess of Hertford, Mr. Newport, Mr.

Onslow, Mr. Austin, and some other English gentlemen, who are come hither to have their share of the diversions, have made no small part of the show."[1] Thus early did Caroline make the acquaintance of representatives of the English nation over which, with her husband, she was one day to reign.

[1] Poley's Despatch, 4th September, 1705.

CHAPTER IV.

THE COURT OF HANOVER.

1705–1706.

THE Court of Hanover at the time of Caroline's marriage was one of the principal courts of North Germany, not equal in importance to that of Berlin, or in splendour to that of Dresden, but second to no others. During the reign of the first Elector, Ernest Augustus, and his consort, the Electress Sophia, Hanover had gained materially in power and importance. The town became the resort of wealthy nobles, who had before divided their attentions between Hamburg and Brunswick. Handsome public buildings and new houses sprang up on every side, and outside the walls, especially towards Herrenhausen, the borders of the city were extending. Few of the houses were large, for the wealthy Hanoverian nobility resided for the most part at their castles in the country, and only came to the capital now and then for the carnival or the opera, which was one of the best in Germany, or to pay their respects to the Elector.

The Hanover of that day, after the model of German mediæval cities, was a town with walls and gates. The old town within the walls was composed of rough narrow streets, and timbered, gabled

houses with high sloping roofs. Some of these old houses, such as Leibnizhaus, a sandstone building of the seventeenth century, still remain, and so do the old brick Markt Kirche, the Rathhaus, and other quaint buildings characteristic of mediæval Germany; they make it easy to conjure up the everyday life of the old Hanoverian burghers.

Caroline found that Hanover was a more important place than Ansbach, and everything was on a larger scale. For instance, it possessed three palaces instead of one, the small Alte Palais, since Sophie Dorothea's disgrace seldom used, the Leine Schloss, a huge barrack of a palace on the banks of the Leine, and last, but not least, Herrenhausen, about two miles without the walls, approached by a magnificent double avenue of limes. The grounds of Herrenhausen were designed in imitation of Versailles, and, though the palace itself was plain and unpretending, the beauty of the place consisted in its great park, full of magnificent limes, elms, chestnuts and maples, and in its garden, one hundred and twenty acres in extent, laid out in the old French style with terraces, statues and fountains, and fenced about with maze-like hedges of clipped hornbeam. The Electress Sophia loved Herrenhausen greatly, though since her widowhood she had been relegated to one wing of it by her son the Elector. He would not permit her any share in the government of the electorate, and she had therefore ample time to devote herself to her philosophic studies. But she also employed her active mind in looking after her English affairs, in which

she was deeply interested. The fact that she was in the direct line of the English succession attracted to Herrenhausen many English people of note, and it became a rallying-point of those who favoured the Hanoverian succession.

The Electress Sophia was the widow of Ernest Augustus, first Elector of Hanover. She was a great princess in every sense of the word, and with her husband had raised Hanover from a petty dukedom to the rank of an electorate. She was the granddaughter of King James the First of England; the daughter of the Princess Elizabeth of England, Queen of Bohemia; the sister of Prince Rupert, who had fought for the royal cause throughout the great rebellion; the niece of Charles the First, and first cousin to Charles the Second and to James the Second, the old King who had lately died in exile at St. Germains.[1] By Act of Parliament the succession

[1] Short genealogical table showing the descent of his Majesty King Edward VII. from James I., the Electress Sophia and Caroline of Ansbach :—

James I.
|
Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia.
|
Sophia, Electress of Hanover.
|
George I.
|
George II. = Caroline of Ansbach.
|
Frederick, Prince of Wales.
|
George III.
|
Duke of Kent.
|
Queen Victoria.
|
Edward VII.

to the throne of England was vested in the Electress Sophia and the heirs male of her body *being Protestant*, and according to this Act the only life between her and the British crown was that of the reigning Queen, Anne, who was childless and in bad health. Sophia was inordinately proud of her English ancestry, and though she had never been in England, or had seen any of her English relatives since Charles the Second mounted the throne of his ancestors, she was much more English than German in her habits, tastes and inclinations. She had unbounded admiration for "her country," as she called it, and its people; she spoke the language perfectly, and kept herself well acquainted with events in England. She even tried to understand the English Constitution, though here, it must be admitted, she was sometimes at fault. She had her mother's soaring ambition: "I care not when I die," said she, "if on my tomb it be written that I was Queen of England". In her immediate circle she loved to be called "the Princess of Wales," though, of course, she had no right to the title, and she frequently spoke of herself by the designation which was afterwards inscribed upon her tomb, "The heiress of Great Britain".

When Caroline came to Hanover, this wonderful old princess, though over seventy years of age, was in full possession of her physical and mental faculties. Her step was firm, her bearing erect, and there was scarcely a wrinkle on her face, or a tooth out of her head. She read and corresponded widely, and

spoke and wrote in five languages, each one perfectly. Notwithstanding her many sorrows (she had lost four sons and her dearly-loved daughter), vexations and deprivations, she maintained a cheerful and lively disposition, largely due to a perfect digestion, which even a course of solid German dinners—for she was a hearty eater and drinker—could not upset. One of her rules was never to eat nor walk alone, and she imputed her sound health largely to her love of company and outdoor exercise. Like her illustrious descendant, Queen Victoria, she never passed a day without spending many hours in the open air; she sometimes drove, but more often walked for two or three hours in the gardens of Herrenhausen, pacing up and down the interminable paths, and talking the whole time in French or English to her companions. In this way she gave audience to many Englishmen of note, from the great Marlborough downwards, and it is on record that she tired out many of them.

Her eldest son, George Louis (later George the First of England), who succeeded his father, Ernest Augustus, as Elector of Hanover in 1698, was in all respects different to his mother, who had inherited many characteristics of the Stuarts. He in no wise resembled them; he seemed to have harked back to some remote German ancestor, for, while his father, Ernest Augustus, was a handsome, genial, pleasure-loving prince, with a courtly air, and a genius for intrigue, the Elector George was ungraceful in person and gesture, reserved and uncouth in speech,

and coarse and unrefined in taste. He was profligate, and penurious even in his profligacy. Unlike his mother, he had no learning, and unlike his father, he had no manners. On the other hand he was straightforward; he never told a lie, at least an unnecessary one; he had a horror of intrigue and double-dealing, and he had great personal courage, as he had proved on many a hard-fought field. His enemies said that he was absolutely devoid of human affection, but he had a sincere liking for his sister, Sophie Charlotte, Queen of Prussia, and a good deal of affection for his daughter, and what proved to be a lasting regard for his unlovely mistress, Ermengarda Melusina Schulemburg. The care he took that his son should make a love match also shows him to have possessed some heart. But few found this out; most were repelled by his harsh manner.

The Electress Sophia was not happy in her children; "none of them ever showed the respect they ought to have done," writes her niece, Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans. Of all her seven children, only three were now living: George the Elector, who disliked her; Maximilian, a Jacobite and Roman Catholic, in exile and open rebellion against his brother; and Ernest Augustus, the youngest of them all. Of her grandson, George Augustus, we have already spoken, and he, too, frequently treated her with disrespect. There remained his sister, the Princess Sophie Dorothea, a young princess of beauty and promise, whose matri-

monial prospects were engaging the attention of the old Electress.

Such was the electoral family of Hanover which Caroline had now joined. There was one other member of it, poor Sophie Dorothea of Celle, consort of the Elector, but she was thrust out of sight, divorced, disgraced, imprisoned, and now entering on the eleventh year of her dreary captivity in the castle of Ahlden, some twenty miles from Hanover. Caroline had doubtless heard of the black business in the old Leine Schloss that July night, 1694, when Königsmarck mysteriously disappeared coming from the Princess's chamber, for the scandal had been discussed in every court in Europe. But there is nothing to show that she expressed any opinion on the guilt or innocence of her unhappy mother-in-law, whether she took her husband's view, who regarded his mother as the victim of the Elector's tyranny, or the view of the Electress Sophia, who could find no words bad enough to condemn her. Caroline was much too discreet to stir the embers of that old family feud, or to mention a name which was not so much as whispered at Herrenhausen. But one thing may be noted in her favour; she showed many courtesies to the imprisoned Princess's mother, the aged Duchess of Celle, who, since her husband's death, had been forced to quit the castle of Celle, and now lived in retirement at Wienhausen. The favour of George Augustus and Caroline protected the Duchess of Celle from open insult, but history is silent as to whether

the Duchess attempted to act as a means of communication between them and her imprisoned daughter.

Caroline's bright and refined presence was sorely needed at the Hanoverian Court, which had changed for the worse since George had assumed the electoral diadem. Under the rule of the pleasure-loving Ernest Augustus and his cheerful spouse Sophia, their court had been one of the gayest in Germany, and splendid out of proportion to the importance of the electorate. The Elector George kept his court too; he maintained the opera and dined in public, after the manner of Louis the Fourteenth, but he was as penurious as Ernest Augustus had been extravagant, and he cut down every unnecessary penny. The Duchess of Orleans, who cordially disliked all the Hanoverian family except her aunt, the Electress Sophia, writes about this time: "It is not to be wondered at that the gaiety that used to be at Hanover has departed; the Elector is so cold that he turns everything into ice—his father and uncle were not like him".

This was a prejudiced view, for the Court of Hanover was still gay, though its gaiety had lost in wit and gained in coarseness since the accession of the Elector George. A sample of its pleasures is afforded in the following description, written by Leibniz, of a *fête* given at Hanover a year or two before Caroline's marriage.[1] The entertainment was

[1] Letter of Leibniz to the Princess of Hohenzollern-Heckingen, Hanover, 25th February, 1702. Some passages in this letter are omitted as unfit for publication.

modelled on Trimalchio's banquet, and suggests a parallel with the grossest pleasures of Nero and imperial Rome. Leibniz writes:—

"A *fête* was given at this Court recently and represented the famous banquet described by Petronius.[1] The part of our modern Trimalchio was played by the Raugrave, and that of his wife, Fortunata, by Fräulein von Pöllnitz, who managed everything as did Fortunata of old in the house of her Trimalchio. Couches were arranged round the table for the guests. The trophies displayed of Trimalchio's arms were composed of empty bottles, and there were very many devices, recording his fine qualities, especially his courage and wit. As the guests entered the banqueting hall, a slave called out, 'Advance in order,' as in ancient time, and they took their places on the couches set apart for them. Eumolpus (Mauro) recited verses in praise of the great Trimalchio, who presently arrived carried on a litter, and preceded by a chorus of singers and musicians, including huntsmen blowing horns, drummers and slaves, all making a great noise. As the procession advanced, Trimalchio's praises were sung after the following fashion:—

À la cour comme à l'armée
On connait sa renommée;
Il ne craint point les bâtards,
Ni de Bacchus ni de Mars.

[1] Nero is satirised under the name of Trimalchio by Petronius Arbiter in the *Satyricon*, and the description of his banquet is gross in the extreme. A comparison of Petronius's account of the banquet in the *Satyricon* with Leibniz's description of the *fête* at Hanover will show how closely the Electoral Court followed the Roman original.

"After the procession had made several turns round the hall, Trimalchio was placed on his couch, and began to eat and drink, cordially inviting his guests to follow his example. His chief carver was called Monsieur Coupé, so that by calling out 'Coupé' he could name him, and at the same time command him to carve, like the carver Carpus in Petronius, to whom his master called *Carpe*, which means much the same as *coupez*. In imitation, too, a pea-hen was brought in sitting on her nest full of eggs, which Trimalchio first declared were half-hatched, but on examination proved to contain delicious ortolans. Little children carried in pies, and birds flew out from them, and were caught again by the fowlers. An ass was led in bearing a load of olives. Several other extraordinary dishes enlivened the banquet and surprised the spectators; everything was copied strictly from the Roman original. There was even a charger, with viands representing the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and Trimalchio gave utterance to some very amusing astrology. Fortunata had to be called several times before she would sit down to table—everything depended on her. Trimalchio being in an erudite mood, had the catalogue of his burlesque library brought to him, and, as the names of the books were read out, he quoted the finest passages, and criticised them. The only wine was Falerno, and Trimalchio, who naturally preferred Hungarian to any other, controlled himself out of respect to his guests. It is true, as regards his personal necessities, he put no constraint upon him-

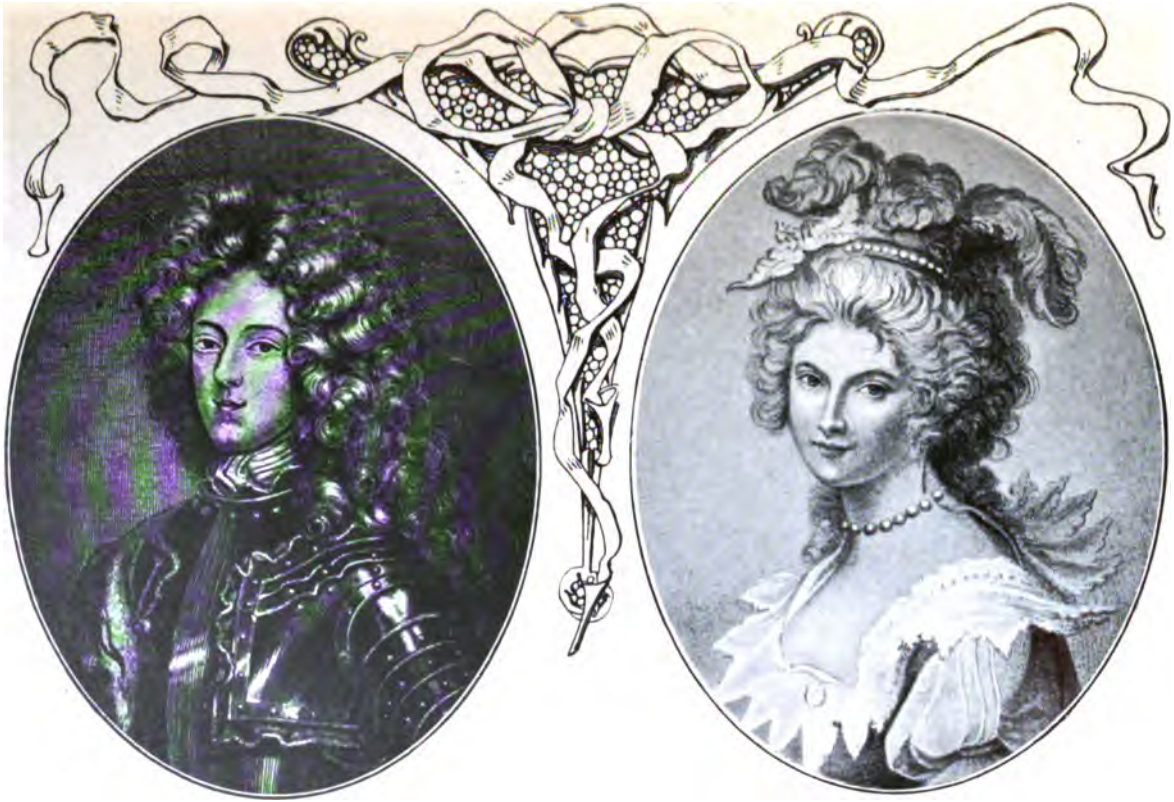
self. . . . Finally, after moralising on happiness and the vanity of things in general, he sent for his will and read it aloud; in it he left orders how he was to be buried, and what monument was to be erected to his memory. He also announced what legacies he would leave, some of them very funny, and he freed his slaves, who during the reading of the will were grimacing and howling in lamentable fashion. During the banquet he granted full liberty to Bacchus, pretending to be proud of having even the gods in his power. Some of the slaves donned caps, the sign of liberty. When their master drank these same slaves imitated the noise of the cannon, or rather of Jove's thunder. . . .

"But in the midst of these festivities the Goddess of Discord cast down her apple. A quarrel forthwith arose between Trimalchio and Fortunata, whereupon he threw a goblet at her head, and there ensued a battle royal. At last peace was restored, and everything ended harmoniously. The procession, with the singers, dancers, horns, drums and other instruments of music, closed the banquet as it had been opened. And to say nothing of Fortunata, Trimalchio certainly surpassed himself."

The fact that such a revel as this could take place under princely patronage shows the grossness of the age in general and Hanover in particular. But a good deal of the coarseness at the Hanoverian Court was due to the fact that it was, at this time, reigned over by mistresses who had not the saving grace of refinement. The Electress Sophia was

old, and her taste for court entertainments had dulled, and even if it had not, the Elector was too jealous to permit her to take the lead. His daughter, Sophie Dorothea, was too young to have any influence. The advent of the Electoral Princess supplied the elements that were lacking, beauty and grace, and a sense of personal dignity and virtue.

Caroline was in every way fitted to queen it over a much larger court than Hanover. Like her adopted mother, the Queen of Prussia, Caroline's intellect was lofty, and she scorned as "paltry" many of the things in which the princesses of her time were most interested. The minutiæ of court etiquette, scandal, dress, needlework and display did not appeal to her; some of these things were all very well as means to an end, but with Caroline emphatically they were not the end. Her natural inclination was all towards serious things; politics and the love of power were with her a passion. She had little opportunity of indulging her taste in this respect at Hanover, for the Elector gave no woman a chance of meddling in politics at his court, and her husband, the Electoral Prince, professed to be of the same mind. So Caroline had for years to conceal the qualities which later made her a stateswoman, and the consummate skill with which she did so proved her to be an actress and diplomatist of no mean order. She had more liberty to follow her literary and philosophical bent, for both the Elector and his son hated books, were indifferent to religion, and treated philosophers and their theories



GEORGE II. AND QUEEN CAROLINE AT THE TIME OF THEIR MARRIAGE.

with open contempt; these questions were all very well for women and bookmen, but they could not be expected to occupy their lofty minds with such trifles. Caroline, therefore, and the Electress Sophia, who was even more learned than her daughter-in-law, were able to indulge their tastes in this respect with comparative freedom, and they enjoyed many hours discussing philosophy with Leibniz or arguing on religious questions with learned divines. They kept themselves well abreast of the intellectual thought of the time, and even tried in some small way to hold reunions at Herrenhausen, after the model of those at Charlottenburg, but in this Caroline had to exercise a good deal of discretion, for her husband, like the Elector, though grossly illiterate, was jealous lest his wife's learning should seem to be superior to his own. Much of Caroline's reading had to be done in secret, and the discussions in which she delighted were carried on in the privacy of the Electress Sophia's apartments.

Within the first few years of her marriage Caroline found that she had need of all her philosophy, natural or acquired, whether derived from Leibniz or inherent in herself, to accommodate herself to the whims and humours of her fantastic little husband. She quickly discovered the faults and foibles of his character, she was soon made aware of his meanness, his shallowness and his petty vanity, of his absurd love of boasting, his fitful and choleric temper, and his incontinence. George Augustus had inherited the bad qualities of both his

parents, and the good qualities of neither, for he had not his father's straightforwardness, nor his mother's generous impulses. He was a contemptible character, but his wife never manifested any contempt for him; her conduct indeed was a model of all that a wife's should be—from the man's point of view. The little prince would rail at her, contradict her, snub her, dash his wig on the ground, strut up and down the room, red and angry, shouting at the top of his voice, but, unlike her mother-in-law, Sophie Dorothea, Caroline never answered her husband; she was always submissive, always dutiful, always the patient Griselda. The result justified her wisdom. George Augustus became genuinely attached to his wife, and she preserved his affection and kept her influence over him. Shortly after her marriage she was attacked by small-pox; it did not seriously impair her beauty, but for many days her life was in danger. Her husband was beside himself with anxiety; he never left her chamber day or night, and caught the disease from her, thus risking his life for hers. Caroline never forgot this proof of his devotion. She was shrewd enough to see from the beginning, what so many wives in equal or less exalted positions fail to see, that her interests and her husband's interests were identical, and that as he prospered she would prosper with him, and, on the other hand, everything which hurt him or his prospects would react on her too. She realised that she could only reach worldly greatness through him, and ambition coloured all her life.

The rôle of the injured wife would do her no good, either in her husband's eyes or in those of the world, so she never played the part, though in all truth he early gave her cause enough. Her life was witness of the love she bore him, a love that was quite unaccountable. From the first moment of her married life to the last, she was absolutely devoted to him; his friends were her friends and his enemies her enemies.

Caroline was soon called upon to take sides in the quarrel between the Electoral Prince and the Elector, which as the years went by became intensified in bitterness. As to the origin of this unnatural feud it is impossible to speak with certainty; some have found it in the elder George's cruel treatment of his wife, Sophie Dorothea, which the son was said to have strongly resented. This may be partly true, for though the young Prince was only a boy when his mother was first imprisoned, he was old enough to have loved her, and he had sufficient understanding to sympathise with her wrongs, as her daughter did. Besides, he often visited his maternal grandparents at Celle, and though the old Duke was neutral, the Duchess warmly espoused her daughter's cause, and hated George Louis and his mother, Sophia, who were her worst enemies. She may have instilled some of these sentiments into her grandson, for his treatment of his grandmother, the Electress Sophia, left much to be desired, though she was devoted to him, and always ready

to plot with him against his father. All these currents of emotion, and cross-currents of jealousy and hatred were in full flood at the Hanoverian Court when Caroline arrived there, and she must have found it exceedingly difficult to steer a straight course among them. She at once decided to throw in her lot with her husband, and to make his cause hers. She soon, therefore, came to be viewed with disfavour by her father-in-law.

In all matters, except those which militated against her husband's interests, Caroline endeavoured to please the Elector. George openly maintained three mistresses, and he expected that the Electoral Princess should receive them and treat them with courtesy. Caroline raised no difficulties on this score, and made the best of the peculiar circumstances she found around her. The subject is not a pleasant one, but it is impossible to give a true picture of the Hanoverian Court and ignore the existence of these women, for they influenced considerably the trend of affairs, and occupied positions only second to the princesses of the electoral family.

Of the Elector's favourites, Ermengarda Melusina Schulemburg was the oldest, and the most accredited. She was descended from the elder branch of the ancient but impoverished house of Schulemburg; her father had held high office in the Court of Berlin, her brother found a similar place in the service of the Venetian Republic. Melusina having no dower and no great charm,

except her youth, made her way to Hanover about 1690, in the hope of improving her fortunes, honourably or dishonourably as chance offered. Melusina attracted the attention of George Louis, Prince of Hanover, as he was then called. He made her an allowance, and procured for her a post at court as maid of honour (save the mark) to his mother, the Electress Sophia. Schulemburg's appearance was the signal for furious quarrels between George Louis and his unhappy consort, who, though she detested her husband, was jealous of his amours. But her protests were useless, and only served to irritate the situation. After Sophie Dorothea's divorce, Schulemburg lived with George Louis to all intents and purposes as his wife, and when he succeeded to the electorate, her position became the more influential. It was not easy to understand how she maintained her sway; it was certainly not by her person. She was very tall, and in her youth had some good looks of the passive German type, but as the years went by she lost the few pretexts to beauty that she possessed. Her figure became extremely thin, in consequence of small-pox she lost all her hair, and was not only marked on the face but wore an ugly wig. She sought to mend these defects by painting and ruddling her face, which only made them worse; her taste in dress was atrocious. Schulemburg was a stupid woman, with a narrow range of vision, and her dominant passion was avarice; but she was undoubtedly attached to her protector, and

remained faithful to him—not that any one ever tempted her fidelity. She had an equable temper, and she was no mischief maker. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu says of her: "She was so much of his (George's) own temper that I do not wonder at the engagement between them. She was duller than himself, and consequently did not find out that he was so."

As the years went by Schulemburg's ascendency was threatened by another and even less attractive lady, Kielmansegge, *née* Platen, whom the Elector had elevated to a similar position. Her mother, the Countess Platen, wife of the Prime Minister, had been for years mistress of his father, Ernest Augustus. She had destined her daughter for a similar position, but at first it seemed that her plans were foiled by the young countess contracting a passion for the son of a Hamburg merchant named Kielmansegge, whom she married under circumstances that gave rise to scandal. After her mother's death she separated from her husband, returned to Hanover, and gave herself up to pleasure. She was exceedingly extravagant in her personal tastes, and soon squandered the sum of £40,000 left her by her mother. She was of a sociable disposition, and having many admirers was not disposed to be unkind to any. George Augustus, who hated her, declared that she intrigued with every man in Hanover, and this being reported to her, she sought an audience of the Electoral Princess, and denied the imputation, producing, as a proof of

her virtue, a certificate of moral character signed by her husband, whom she had now deserted. Caroline laughed, and told her "it was indeed a bad reputation which rendered such a certificate necessary". Kielmansegge was clever, and a good conversationalist, and she maintained her somewhat precarious hold over the Elector by amusing him. She had more wit and cunning than Schulemburg, but her morals were worse, and her appearance was equally unattractive, though in another way. Her wig was black, whereas Schulemburg's was red, and she was of enormous and unwieldy bulk, whereas Schulemburg was lean to emaciation. Schulemburg had to heighten her charms by rouge; Kielmansegge, on the other hand, was naturally so highly coloured that she sought to tone down her complexion by copious dressings of powder; the effect in either case was equally unlovely. The Electress Sophia mocked at them both, and had nicknames for them both; Schulemburg she called "The tall malkin," and used to ask the courtiers what her son could see in her. Kielmansegge she dubbed "The fat hen".

There remained yet another of these ladies—the beautiful Countess Platen, a sister-in-law of Madame Kielmansegge, and wife of Count Platen the younger. The family of Platen seem to have formed a sort of hereditary hierarchy of shame. When the young countess first appeared at court after her marriage, in the height of her beauty, the Elector took little notice of her. And as the Elector's

favour was counted a great honour among the Hanoverian ladies, Countess Platen was deeply mortified at this ignoring of her charms. She determined on a bold stroke of policy—she sought an audience of his Highness, and with tears in her eyes besought him not to treat her so rudely. The astonished Elector declared that he was ignorant of having done anything of the kind, and added gallantly that she was the most beautiful woman at his court. "If that be true, sir," replied the countess, weeping, "why do you pass all your time with Schulemburg, while I hardly receive the honour of a glance from you?" The gallant George promised to mend his manners, and soon came to visit her so frequently that her husband, objecting to the intimacy, separated from her, and left her wholly to the Elector. The Countess Platen was the best loved of all the Elector's favourites, but, like Kielmansegge, she was not faithful to him. Among the Englishmen who came to Hanover about this time was the younger Craggs, son of James Craggs, a Whig place-hunter of the baser sort. According to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the elder Craggs had been at one time footman to the Duchess of Norfolk, and was employed by her in an intrigue she had with King James the Second. He acquitted himself with so much secrecy and discretion that the duchess recommended him to the Duke of Marlborough, who employed him for purposes of political and other intrigues. Thus, by trading on the secrets of the great and wealthy, Craggs at length acquired a

fortune and entered parliament. His son James Craggs was an exceeding strong, good-looking youth, with great assurance and easy manners, though Lady Mary declares that "there was a coarseness in his face and shape that had more the air of a porter than a gentleman". But coarseness was no drawback at the Court of Hanover, and the Countess Platen soon became enamoured of the well-favoured young Englishman, and introduced him to the notice of the Elector, who, ignorant or careless of the intrigue, showed him a good deal of favour, and promised him a good appointment if ever he became King of England. George amply redeemed this promise later, and young Craggs was one of the few Englishmen admitted to his private circle.

Since the passing of the Act of Succession in 1700 under King William, and Lord Macclesfield's mission to Hanover in 1701, when he presented a copy of the Act to the Electress Sophia, and since the recognition by Anne of the *status quo* on her accession in 1702, the English prospects of the electoral family had sensibly improved, and the Hanoverian succession had quitted the region of abstract theories to enter the realm of practical politics. The time-servers in England showed their sensible appreciation of this by turning their attention from St. Germains to Hanover. Marlborough, the arch time-server of them all, was at Hanover at the end of 1704, and Prince Ernest Augustus, the youngest son of the Electress Sophia,

had fought under him in one of his campaigns. Marlborough was said at one time to have entertained the project of marrying his third daughter to the Electoral Prince as a return for his powerful aid to the electoral family, but the scheme fell through, if it were ever seriously considered. It might have been, for Marlborough's support was very valuable. Party feeling ran very high in England, and there was a strong Jacobite faction which heavily discounted the prospects of the Hanoverian succession. At the beginning of her reign, Anne, apprehensive that the Jacobites might become too powerful and shake her position on the throne, to which her title was none too sure, leant, or appeared to lean, in the direction of Hanover. The question was complicated, too, by the fact that the Scottish Parliament had rejected the Bill for the Hanoverian succession with every mark of contempt, and had passed a measure which seemed to settle the succession of the Scottish crown upon the Duke of Hamilton. At least, it excluded the House of Hanover as aliens, and for a time there was the anomaly that though the Electress Sophia might have succeeded to the throne of England, she could not have worn the crown of Scotland, and the kingdoms would again have become divided. It was largely to end these complications that the Act of Union between England and Scotland was brought forward, and one of its most important clauses was that the succession of the crown of Scotland, like that of England, should be vested in

the Electress Sophia, and her heirs, being Protestant, a clause which was hotly debated. An Act was also passed to naturalise the electoral family.

Elated by these successes, the next move of the Whigs was to suggest to the Electress Sophia that she should come over to England on a visit, in order that the people might see "the heiress of Great Britain," and so strengthen their affection to her person. If she could not come, they suggested that her son or her grandson should take her place. The Electress Sophia would gladly have visited England with the Electoral Prince and the Electoral Princess, but she was far too shrewd to make the journey at the bidding of a faction, and, while expressing her willingness, she stipulated that the invitation must come from the Queen herself. That invitation was never given, for Anne had a positive horror of seeing her Hanoverian successors in England during her lifetime. She declared that their presence would be like exposing her coffin to her view before she was dead. The electoral family were very well to use as pawns to check the moves of the Jacobites, but to see them in London would be more unpleasant to her than the arrival of James himself. The Whigs, despite the Queen's opposition, were determined to bring them over if possible, and they talked of giving the old Electress, should she come, an escort into London of fifty thousand men, as a warning to the Queen, whose leanings towards her brother they suspected, not to play fast and loose with the Protestant succession.

The Whig agent at Hanover was instructed to sound the Elector, but, to his credit be it said, George would have nothing whatever to do with the scheme. He hated intrigues of all kinds, and cared very little about the English succession, except as an influence to help his beloved electorate. He felt that he could never be sure of England, and he was too practical to miss the substance for the shadow.

Hanover was certainly a substantial possession. It became the fashion later in England to deride it as an unimportant electorate, and George as a petty German prince. But for years before George the First ascended the throne of England, Hanover had been gradually increasing in influence, and was a factor to be reckoned with in the great political issues of western and northern Europe. William of Orange recognised its importance, Louis the Fourteenth made frequent overtures to it, and the Emperor sought to conciliate it.[1] By the death of his uncle, the Duke of Celle, George became the ruler of all the Brunswick-Lüneburg dominions, and gained considerably in wealth and influence. He had not his mother's ambition, and he was loath to imperil his prosperous and loyal electorate and an assured position for an insecure title to a throne beset with dangers and difficulties. He shared with Europe the belief that the English were a fickle and revolutionary

[1] Dr. A. W. Ward, the greatest English authority on Hanoverian history, has brought this point out clearly in his *Notes on the Personal Union between England and Hanover.*

people. Within living memory they had risen in rebellion, beheaded their king and established a republic. Then they had forsaken the republic and restored the monarchy. In the following reign they had had a revolution, driven their king into exile, and brought over a Dutch prince to reign over them. Undoubtedly they were not to be trusted, and what they might do in the future no one could say.

At the time of Caroline's marriage the English prospects of the electoral family were bright. Though the visit to England was for the moment postponed, Anne was compelled to temporise, for the Whigs carried everything before them. Poley the English envoy was recalled, and Howe, who was in favour with the Whigs, was sent over to Hanover in his place. The Electress was given to think that the invitation would shortly come, and Caroline thought the same. All things English were in high favour at Hanover at this time. Howe celebrated the Queen's birthday by a dance, which was honoured not only by George Augustus and Caroline, but also by the Electress Sophia. Howe writes :—

"The Queen's birthday happening to be upon the Wednesday, I thought it proper to keep it the next day, and accordingly I invited ten or twelve couples of young people to dance at night. The Electoral Prince and Princess with the Margrave, her brother, and the young Princess of Hanover hearing of it, told me the night before that they

would come and dance. Half an hour before the ball began, they brought me word that the Electress was also coming. The Electress gave the Queen's health at supper, and stayed till two o'clock."[1]

The same year the bells at Hanover rang out to celebrate the wedding of Princess Sophie Dorothea with her first cousin, Frederick William, Crown Prince of Prussia. This marriage was one after the Electress Sophia's own heart, and it at once gratified her ambition and appealed to her affections. The young Princess had a good deal of beauty, an equable temper, and a fair share of the family obstinacy; she had something of her mother's charm, but not much of her grandmother's commanding intellect. The Electress Sophia had busied herself for some time with matrimonial schemes on Sophie Dorothea's behalf. There had been a project for marrying her to the King of Sweden, but it fell through, and though it had been known for a long time that Frederick William loved his pretty Hanoverian cousin, there were obstacles in the way, notably the opposition of the King of Prussia, who had no desire to draw the bonds between Prussia and Hanover any closer. He was angry at having been outwitted in the matter of the Electoral Prince's marriage to the Princess of Ansbach. After the Queen of Prussia's death, the King busied himself to find a suitable bride for his son, but Frederick William rejected one matrimonial project after another, and obstinately declared that he would wed

[1] Howe's Despatch, Hanover, 18th February, 1706.

his cousin, Sophie Dorothea, and none other. Knowing the violence of his temper, and the impossibility of reasoning with him, his father had to give way, which he did with the better grace as he was anxious to secure the future of the dynasty. The marriage was celebrated at Hanover in 1706. The King of Prussia seized the opportunity to gratify his love of pageantry, and the festivities were prolonged for many days.

They were graced, too, by the presence of a special embassy from England, with Lords Halifax and Dorset at its head. Queen Anne had been compelled by the Whig administration to send them over to Hanover to present to the Electress Sophia a copy of the recent Act of Parliament naturalising the electoral family in England. The mission was a very welcome one to the old Electress, and she gave the English lords a formal audience at Herrenhausen, when after delivering his credentials Lord Halifax proceeded to address her in a set speech. In the middle of the address, the Electress started up from her chair, and backing to the wall remained fixed against it until the ceremony ended. Lord Halifax was much mystified by this unusual proceeding, and eventually discovered that the Electress had in her room a portrait of her cousin, James, her rival to the throne. She suddenly remembered it was there, and fearing the Whig lords (Halifax was a noted Whig leader) would suspect her of Jacobitism if they saw it, she adopted this means of hiding it. It was the fashion among the Whigs

to call James the "Pretender," and to pretend to doubt his legitimacy, but the Electress Sophia knew that he was as truly the son of James the Second as George was her own, and though she was eager to wear the crown of England, she would not stoop to such a subterfuge to gain it, preferring to base her claim on the broader and surer ground of the will of the people, and the interests of the Protestant religion.

Lord Halifax was accompanied on this mission by Sir John Vanburgh in his official capacity of Clarenceux King of Arms, who invested the Electoral Prince with the insignia of the Garter. Another and more famous Englishman, Joseph Addison, came with Halifax as secretary to the mission. It was on this occasion Addison first saw Caroline, his future benefactress, and he expressed himself enthusiastically concerning her beauty and talents.

The presence of the English mission added in no small degree to the brilliance of the wedding festivities, which after tedious ceremonial at last came to an end, and the bride and bridegroom departed for Berlin. It was not a peaceful domestic outlook for Sophie Dorothea, nor did it prove so; but she and her husband were sincerely attached to one another, and despite many violent quarrels and much provocation on either side, they managed to live together until their union was broken by death. Seven years after his marriage, by the death of his father, Frederick William ascended

the throne, and Sophie Dorothea became the second Queen of Prussia. But what will cause her name to be remembered throughout all generations is that she was the mother of Frederick the Great.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEIRESS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

1706–1713.

QUEEN ANNE'S invitation to the electoral family still tarried in the coming. Meanwhile the old Electress, despite her assurances to the Queen, was listening to the suggestions put forward by the English Whigs, through their emissaries in Hanover. Her favourite plan was, that though she herself, as heiress to the throne, could not visit England without an express invitation from the Queen, yet the Electoral Prince and Caroline might do so. She seems thus to have prompted her grandson to court popularity with the English at the expense of his father. The Elector placed little faith in Queen Anne, who he considered was merely playing him off against her brother, James. He had soon an opportunity of showing his displeasure publicly. An important event took place in the electoral family, which had a direct bearing upon the English succession; Caroline, on February 5th, 1707, more than a year after her marriage, gave birth to the much wished-for son and heir. Howe, the English envoy, writes: "This Court having for some time past almost despaired of

SOPHIA HANNOVERENSIS DUCISSA
BRVNSWICKEN: LVNENBVRGH
The true Effigies of the most Illustrious Princess
Sophia of Hannover declared next in Succession to the Crown
of ENGLAND after Her Maj.ty Queen Ann & Her Issue by late Act of Parliament
Drawn from an Original Painting brought from HANNOVER by the RIGHT
Hon.ble THOMAS Earl of PAISLEY and most humbly dedicated to his Lordship by His Lordships
Most Obedient Faithfull humble Servt

THE ELECTRESS SOPHIA OF HANOVER.

the Princess Electoral being brought to bed, and most people apprehensive that her bigness, which has continued for so long, was rather an effect of a distemper than that she was with child, her Highness was taken ill last Friday at dinner, and last night, about seven o'clock, the Countess d'Eke, her lady of the bedchamber, sent me word that the Princess was delivered of a son."[1]

Considering that, according to Act of Parliament, the infant now born was in the direct line of succession to the English crown, it was extraordinary that the English envoy should not have been present at the birth, or the event notified to him with proper ceremony; the more extraordinary when it is remembered that this was an age much given to inventing fables about the births of princes, and the lie that a surreptitious child had been introduced into the Queen Mary Beatrice's bedchamber in a warming pan was largely relied upon by the Whigs to upset the Stuart dynasty.

This was not the only affront which the Elector put upon Queen Anne's representative. The infant prince was christened a few days later in the Princess's bedchamber, and given the name of Frederick Louis. The Electress Sophia was present at the ceremony, but no invitation was sent to the English envoy, nor was he allowed to see either the Princess or the infant until ten days later, and he writes home

[1] Howe's Despatch, Hanover, 5th February, 1707. The son now born was Frederick Louis, later Prince of Wales, the father of George III.

that he considers such proceedings "unaccountable". After repeated representations, he was admitted to the Princess's chamber, and writing home he mentions the fact, and says that he found "the women all admiring the largeness and strength of the child". That these proceedings were directly due to the Elector may be gathered from the English envoy's next despatch, which also shows that thus early there was bad feeling between the father and the son.

"Being at the Court," he writes, "the other day, the Prince Electoral took me away from the rest of the company, and making great professions of duty to the Queen, he desired me that I would represent all things favourably on his side, and *he* was not the cause that matters were arranged at the Princess's lying-in and the christening of the child with so little respect to the Queen, and so little regard to England. For my part I have taken no notice of it to any of them, but I think the whole proceeding has been very extraordinary. Wherever the fault is, I won't pretend to judge."[1]

There is little doubt that the Elector George had learned of the Electress Sophia's and his son's intrigues, and had determined to show his independence and his indifference to the English succession in this manner. He might have been more polite without any sacrifice of principle. But Queen Anne had to swallow the affront, and after the birth of Prince Frederick she was forced to create Prince George Augustus, Baron Tewkesbury, Viscount

[1] Howe's Despatch, Hanover, 25th February, 1707.

Northallerton, Earl of Milford Haven, Marquis and Duke of Cambridge, and to give him precedence over the whole peerage. The patent of the dukedom was sent over to the English envoy at Hanover, with instructions that he was to deliver it with ceremony. The Whigs had, however, reckoned without the Elector, who was jealous of these English honours to his son, and regarded them as a proof of his mother's desire to oust him from the succession. When Howe notified to the Elector that the patent had arrived, and asked for an opportunity to deliver it in due form, the Elector did not condescend to reply, but sent his footman to bring it to the palace. The envoy very properly refused to deliver the Queen's patent to such a messenger, and explained with some indignation that it was "the highest gift the Queen had to bestow". To this representation no answer was returned, and Howe writes home complaining of the "delay and disrespect" with which the Queen's gift was treated, and states that though he pressed repeatedly for a public audience, the Ministers could not decide upon giving him one, and he adds: "They would have me think it is the Elector's jealousy of the Prince that would have it otherwise; the Electress is much concerned".[1]

This difficulty continued for some time, but it was finally got over by the Electoral Prince receiving the patent privately from the English envoy, and the Prince, on the occasion of its presentation, made "many expressions of duty and gratitude for

[1] Howe's Despatch, Hanover, 11th March, 1707.

the great honour and favour the Queen had been pleased to show him. He also made many excuses, and desired me to represent that it was not *his* fault the receiving of the patent was not performed in the most respectful manner."[1]

Anne again had to ignore the Elector's affront, though she did not hesitate to quote it to the Whigs as an additional reason why she should not invite any member of the Hanoverian family to England, and, by way of marking her displeasure in a diplomatic manner, she recalled Howe, and replaced him by D'Alais, who was in every way his predecessor's inferior; he could not speak or write the English language, and was the less likely to have any direct communication with the disaffected in England. Still Anne was compelled to disguise her dislike, and when Caroline gave birth to a daughter,[2] the Queen became godmother to the infant, who was named after her, though she contrived to distil a drop of bitterness into the cup by nominating the Duchess of Celle, who was hated by the Electress Sophia, to act as her proxy.

Though the Queen was successful, now on one pretext, now on another, in preventing the arrival of any member of the electoral family in England, the fact remained that the Hanoverian succession was the law of the land, and the Queen's bad health made it likely that in all human probability that

[1] Howe's Despatch, Hanover, 11th March, 1707.

[2] Anne; born in 1709. She was afterwards Princess Royal of England, and married in 1733 the Prince of Orange.

succession would not long be delayed. These considerations led many eminent Englishmen to cultivate good relations with the Court of Hanover, and caused many well-born adventurers, too, who had not been particularly successful at home, to journey to Herrenhausen with the object of ingratiating themselves with the electoral family against the time when they should come into their kingdom. Among these worldly pilgrims were the Howards, husband and wife. Henrietta Howard was the eldest daughter of a Norfolk baronet, Sir Henry Hobart, and had married, when quite young, Henry Howard, third son of the Earl of Suffolk, a spendthrift who possessed no patrimony, and probably married her because of her fortune of £6,000, a fair portion for a woman in that day. £4,000 of this sum was settled on Mrs. Howard, the rest her husband quickly got rid of. He was a good-looking young fellow, but dissipated and drunken, with no principles, and a violent temper. It soon became evident that he and his wife could not afford to live in England as befitted their station, and Howard's character was so well known that he could not obtain any appointment at home; they therefore resolved to repair to Hanover, where living was much cheaper than in England, and throw in their fortunes with the electoral family.

Mrs. Howard, at the time of her arrival in Hanover, had pretensions to beauty; she was of medium height and a good figure, with pretty features and a pleasing expression. Her greatest

beauty was her abundant light brown hair, as fine as spun silk. This she is said to have sacrificed, either to pay the expenses of the journey or to defray the cost of a dinner the Howards gave to certain influential Hanoverians after their arrival. They were often in great straits for money, even at Hanover. They took lodgings in the town, and duly paid their court to the "heiress of Great Britain" at Herrenhausen. The Electress Sophia was delighted with Mrs. Howard; she was English and well-born, which constituted a sure passport to her favour; she was pleasant and amiable, and, though not the prodigy of intellect some of her admirers subsequently declared her to be, she was well-informed and well-read, much more so than the Hanoverian ladies. She soon became a welcome guest in the apartments of the Electress Sophia and the Electoral Princess, where she could even simulate an interest in the philosophy of Leibniz. Mrs. Howard possessed in a consummate degree the artfulness which goes to make a successful courtier, and she knew exactly how far flattery should go.[1] Caroline grew to like her, and appointed her one of her *dames du palais*; she found in Mrs. Howard a companion naturally refined in speech and conduct, and thus a welcome change to the coarseness of many of the Hanoverian ladies.

But the Howards had not come all the way to Hanover to figure at the coteries of the Electress and the Electoral Princess. They sought more

[1] *Vide* Swift's character of Mrs. Howard, *Suffolk Correspondence.*

substantial rewards, and these they knew rested with the princes rather than the princesses of the electoral house. George Augustus, whose vanity led him to desire a reputation for gallantry, which had mainly rested on hearsay, was early attracted to Mrs. Howard, and before long spent many hours in her society. The acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy, and the lady found herself not only the servant of the Electoral Princess, but also the friend of the Electoral Prince. If we bear in mind the laxity of the manners and morals of courts in general at this time, and the Hanoverian Court in particular, it is puerile to regard this intimacy as "Platonic," as some have described it. George Augustus was not of a nature to appreciate intellectual friendship between man and woman; and such friendships were not understood at the Court of Hanover, where Mrs. Howard, though not occupying the position of accredited mistress to the Electoral Prince, as Schulemburg did to the Elector (for she would probably have objected to such publicity), came to be universally so regarded. The fact that, despite her intimacy with George Augustus, she continued to be received by the Electress Sophia, and was still admitted to the society of the Electoral Princess, goes for nothing. Both Princesses were women of the world, and both had been reared in courts not conspicuous for their morality. The Electress Sophia had for years tolerated, nay more, had recognised and received the Countess Platen as the mistress of her husband,

the late Elector, and Schulemburg as the mistress of her son, the present Elector. Her daughter, Sophie Charlotte, had followed the same policy towards the mistress of her husband, the King of Prussia, and Caroline, who had spent her childhood in the corrupt Court of Dresden, her girlhood at Berlin, and had married into the family of Hanover, was not likely to take a different line. If she had been tempted to do so, she had the fate of her unhappy mother-in-law before her eyes, who, largely in consequence of her lack of complaisance, was now dragging out her life in dreary Ahlden. At Hanover even the court chaplain would probably have found excuses for these irregularities; he would have pleaded that princes were not like other men, and as they were obliged to make marriages of policy, they were not amenable to the laws that govern meaner mortals. Caroline's was not wholly a marriage of policy; there is abundant evidence to prove that she was attached to her husband, and he, so far as it was in his nature to be so, was devoted to her. But he must have been very tiresome sometimes, with his boasting and strutting, his silly vanity and absurd stories, his outbursts of temper and his utter inability to understand or sympathise with the higher side of her nature, and she was doubtless glad when he transferred some of his society to Mrs. Howard, provided always that Mrs. Howard kept her place. To do Mrs. Howard justice, she showed no desire to vaunt herself, or take advantage of the intimacy. She

must indeed have been content with very small things, for the Electoral Prince, like his father, was mean; but had he been generous, he had at this time neither money to give nor patronage to bestow, the rewards were all in the future. The Electress Sophia was pleased rather than otherwise with her grandson's intimacy with Mrs. Howard: "It will improve his English," she is reported to have said. Regarding such affairs as inevitable she thought he could not have chosen better than this lady, who had a complaisant husband, and whose conduct to the world was a model of propriety, verging on prudishness.

Caroline, at any rate, accepted the situation with philosophy. She knew her husband's weaknesses and made allowance for them. She had greater things to occupy her mind than his domestic irregularities, for, though outwardly indifferent to the English succession, she was in reality keenly concerned about it. She did not dare to show her interest too prominently, for the Electoral Prince had his own views on the subservience of women generally, and wives in particular, and was jealous of his wife taking any public part in politics, lest it should be said that she governed him, as in fact she did. To better qualify herself for her future position, Caroline took into her service a girl from England, but born in Hanover, named Brandshagen, who read and talked English with her daily. It is a pity that she did not engage a native-born Englishwoman while she was about it, as such a teacher

might have corrected the future Queen's English, which was impaired by a marked German accent until the end of her life.

Queen Anne showed her interest in Caroline, or at least her knowledge of her existence, by frequently sending her "her compliments" through the English envoy, and, a little tardily, she sent over a present to Hanover for her godchild, the Princess Anne, and a letter full of good wishes.

Within the next few years Caroline gave birth to two more daughters, Amelia and Caroline.[1] The Queen of England sent neither gifts nor letters on the occasion of their birth, nor took any notice of them. For the state of political parties had now changed in England, and with the change the need of conciliating the Hanoverian family had receded into the background.

The popular feeling expressed at the time of Sacheverell's trial had shown the Queen that the nation was weary of the Whigs, and when the new Parliament met in November, 1710, it was found that the Tory party largely predominated, and sweeping changes were made in the Ministry. Harley, Earl of Oxford, became Lord Treasurer, and stood highest in the Queen's confidence; St. John, shortly afterwards created Viscount Bolingbroke, became Secretary of State; and the Duke of Ormonde, a noted Jacobite, was appointed to the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. Anne had broken at

[1] Princess Amelia was born in 1710, Princess Caroline in 1713. They both died unmarried.

last with the imperious Duchess of Marlborough, and had taken a new favourite, one Abigail Hill, afterwards Lady Masham, whose interest was all for the Tories. Marlborough still retained command of the army, but resigned all the places held by his duchess, and absented himself from court.

It is difficult to follow Anne's mind at this time, or the tortuous policy of her Ministers with regard to the Hanoverian succession, since one act contradicted another, and one utterance was at variance with the next. There must have been some hard lying on both sides, and there was certainly no standard of political honour, morality or truth. The Queen's health was bad, and her life uncertain, and the policy of most of her Ministers was dictated by the wish to stand well with both claimants to the throne, so that they might be on the safe side whatever happened. Such, at least, was the policy of Oxford, who was personally in favour of the Hanoverian succession, yet corresponded with Marshal Berwick for the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, on condition of Anne retaining the crown for life, and due security being given for religious and political freedom. Marlborough, on the other hand, while corresponding with St. Germains, did not scruple to approach the Electress Sophia with assurances of absolute devotion, and to denounce Oxford and Bolingbroke as traitors desirous of placing James on the throne of England. Marlborough frequently visited Hanover, and in return for his support, and also because he favoured the

continuance of the war between the Allies and France, the Elector upheld Marlborough's command of the English army in Flanders.

England, however, was weary of the war, which had been dragging on for years, and had cost her thousands of men and millions of money, without her having any direct interest in it, however advantageous its prosecution might be to the Elector of Hanover and others. The Tory Ministry, upon reflection, determined to withdraw England from the Allies, and to make peace with France, partly, no doubt, because this policy would be the means of breaking the power of Marlborough. The death of the Emperor Joseph, which occurred in 1711, furnished an excuse for England to reconsider her position and to begin negotiations for peace. Queen Anne addressed a personal letter to the Electress Sophia, and sent it by Lord Rivers, praying her to use her influence to promote the peace of Europe. But the Electress was much hurt by the Queen's behaviour, and the fact that, after all these years of effort, neither she nor any member of her House had yet been invited to England, and she replied very coldly. The interests of Hanover were all in favour of the prosecution of the war, and of England continuing her share, or more than her share, of the burden, so the Elector departed from his usual policy of abstention in English affairs, to oppose both the Queen and her Ministers. He even went so far as to instruct his envoy, Bothmar, who had come over to London

with Marlborough, to present a memorial against the peace. This was regarded as an unwarrantable interference on the part of a foreign prince with English affairs, and both the Queen and the House of Commons were extremely indignant. The House of Lords, which had a Whig majority, supported Marlborough and the Elector, but the Queen, to overcome their opposition, created twelve new peers, and, supported by popular feeling, triumphed all along the line. Bothmar was denounced by Bolingbroke as a "most inveterate party man," and the Queen insisted on his recall. Marlborough was dismissed from all his employments, and retired to Antwerp in disgrace. England withdrew from the Allies, and the Peace of Utrecht was signed, after protracted negotiations, on March 31st, 1713. There is no need to enter here into the question of its merits or demerits; it will suffice to say that the peace was undoubtedly popular in England, and, when proclaimed, was hailed by the people with demonstrations of joy.

The popular enthusiasm looked ominous for the Hanoverian succession. The Elector had departed for once from his wise policy of abstention, and the result was disastrous. England left Hanover to shift for itself; moreover, it emphatically resented Hanoverian interference. The Act guaranteeing the succession to the Electress Sophia and her heirs still remained on the Statute Book, but in the present temper of the House of Commons and the nation it might be repealed any day. The gravity of the situation was

fully realised at the Electoral Court; the coveted crown of England seemed to be receding into the distance. The Elector shrugged his shoulders and said nothing, but the Electress Sophia and the Electoral Prince were greatly exercised by the untoward turn of events, and put their heads together to see what could be done. Caroline was also very anxious—how much so is shown by the letters which passed between her and Leibniz at this time. Leibniz, who was at Vienna, wrote to Caroline to send her his good wishes for Christmas, and at the same time to condole with her on the outlook in England. His letter runs as follows:—

"VIENNA, *December 16th*, 1713.

"I have not troubled your Highness with letters since I left Hanover, as I had nothing of interest to tell you, but I must not neglect the opportunity which this season gives me of assuring your Highness of my perpetual devotion, and I pray God to grant you the same measure of years as the Electress enjoys, and the same good health. And I pray also that you may one day enjoy the title of Queen of England so well worn by Queen Elizabeth, which you so highly merit. Consequently I wish the same good things to his Highness, your consort, since you can only occupy the throne of that great Queen with him. Whenever the gazettes publish favourable rumours concerning you and affairs in England, I devoutly pray that they may become true; sometimes it is rumoured here that a fleet is

LEIBNIZ.

about to escort you both to England, and a powerful alliance is being formed to support your claims. I have even read that the Tsar is only strengthening his navy in order to supply you with knights of the round table. It is time to translate all these rumours into action, as our enemies do not sleep. Count Gallas, who is leaving for Rome in a few days, tells me that well-informed people in England think that the first act of the present Tory Ministry will be to put down the Whigs, the second to confirm the peace, and the third to change the law of succession. I hear that in Hanover there is strong opposition to all this; I hope it may be so, with all my heart."

To this Caroline replied:—

"HANOVER, *December 27th*, 1713.

"I assure you that of all the letters which this season has brought me yours has been the most welcome. You do well to send me your good wishes for the throne of England, which are sorely needed just now, for in spite of all the favourable rumours you mention, affairs there seem to be going from bad to worse. For my part (and I am a woman and like to delude myself) I cling to the hope that, however bad things may be now, they will ultimately turn to the advantage of our House. I accept the comparison which you draw, though all too flattering, between me and Queen Elizabeth as a good omen. Like Elizabeth, the Electress's rights are denied her by a jealous sister with a bad

temper (Queen Anne), and she will never be sure of the English crown until her accession to the throne. God be praised that our Princess of Wales (the Electress Sophia) is better than ever, and by her good health confounds all the machinations of her enemies."

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAST YEAR AT HANOVER.

1714.

THE history of the last year of Queen Anne's reign, with its plots and counter plots, strife of statesmen and bitter party feuds, has often been written, so far as England is concerned. But comparatively little is known of how this eventful year, so important in fortunes of the dynasty, passed at Hanover. Every one, both in England and Hanover, felt that a crisis was imminent, yet no one, on either side of the water, prepared for it. The Queen's death was likely to be accelerated by her own mental struggles with regard to the succession to her crown, and by the fierce quarrels and jealousies that raged among her advisers. The rival ministers could scarce forbear coming to blows in her presence, the rival claimants to her throne were eager to snatch the sceptre from her failing hand almost before she was dead. James, flitting between Lorraine and St. Germains, was in active correspondence with his friends in England waiting for the psychological moment to take action. Over at Herrenhausen, the aged Electress watched with trembling eagerness

every move at the English Court, straining her ears for the summons which never came. Though she knew it not, in these last months she and Anne were running a race for life.

The news that came to Sophia from England was bad, as bad as it could be. The Tories were in power, and what was worse, the Jacobite section of the Tories, headed by Bolingbroke and Ormonde, were gaining swift ascendency over Oxford, who still, outwardly at any rate, professed himself in favour of the Hanoverian succession, and so, for that matter, did Bolingbroke too. The Queen, it is true, continued to profess her friendship to the House of Hanover, but her professions were as nothing worth. As her health failed, her conscience reproached her with the part she had played towards her exiled brother. There was another consideration which weighed with her more than all the rest, one that does not seem to have been given due weight in the criticisms which have been passed on her vacillating conduct, either from the Hanoverian or the Jacobite point of view. Like her grandfather, Charles the First, Anne was fervently attached to the Church of England; her love for it was the one fixed point in her otherwise tortuous policy. Like Charles the First, she saw the English Church through the medium of a highly coloured light, as a reformed branch of the Church Catholic, and as the *via media* between Protestantism and Popery. Her love for the Church was a passionate conviction, and her zeal for its welfare was shown by many acts throughout

her reign. The excuse urged by her friends for her conduct to her father was that she had been actuated by zeal for the Church, which was in danger at his hands.

The question now presented itself again. How would the Church fare with a Roman Catholic as her successor? James, it was true, spoke fair, and declared his determination to maintain the Church of England in all its rights and privileges as by law established, but the Queen remembered that King James the Second had promised the same, and had persecuted the Church beyond measure. The people had not forgotten the expulsion of the Fellows of Magdalen, or the committal of the seven bishops to the Tower. Would not her brother also, in the same spirit of blind bigotry, seek to destroy one of the strongest bulwarks of the throne? "How can I serve him, my lord?" she once asked Buckingham. "You know well that a Papist cannot enjoy this crown in peace. All would be easy," she continued, "if he would enter the pale of the Church of England."[1] But that was what James would not do. On the other hand, the Church would gain little, and probably suffer much, if its temporal Head were the Electress Sophia, a German Calvinist, with a strong bias towards rationalism, as was shown by her patronage of the sceptic Toland and others of the same way of thinking. In truth, some sympathy must be extended to Queen Anne, and those of her many subjects who thought with her. It is no

[1] Macpherson Stuart Papers, vol. ii.

wonder they were undecided how to act, for they were between the Scylla of Popery and the Charybdis of Calvinism.

Yet the impassioned appeal which James had addressed to his sister that she would prefer "your own brother, the last male of our name, to the Electress of Hanover, the remotest relation we have, whose friendship you have no reason to rely on, or to be fond of, and who will leave the government to foreigners of another language, and of another interest,"[1] could not fail to awaken a responsive echo in the Queen's heart. Other considerations weighed too. She was by temperament superstitious, and as her health failed and she saw herself like to die, childless, friendless and alone, she came to think that the restoration of the crown to her brother was the only atonement she could make for the wrong she, his best-loved child, had done her father. This sentiment of Queen Anne's was well understood, and for the most part approved, by the Courts of Europe, with whom, almost without exception, the Hanoverian claims were unpopular, and considered to have little chance of success. The ambitions of the Electress Sophia met with no sympathy, and the idea of her becoming Queen of England was scouted as preposterous. Even her beloved niece and confidante, the Duchess of Orleans, gave her cold comfort. "Queen Anne,"

[1] Letter of James to Queen Anne, May, 1711. In this letter he styles himself "The Chevalier St. George". It is to be noted that he does not speak of the Electress Sophia as a foreigner, but only of her descendants.

she wrote to her, "must be well aware in her heart of hearts that our young king is her brother; I feel certain that her conscience will wake up before her death, and she will do justice to her brother".[1]

Neither the Electress Sophia nor the Duchess of Orleans realised that the crown of England was not in the Queen's gift, or that there was a power behind the throne greater than the throne. If this power had been vested in the people, there is little doubt that James would have come into his own. In 1714 the fickle tide to popular feeling seemed to be flowing in his favour. For the last year or two the birthday of James had been celebrated as openly as if he had been *de facto* and not *de jure* the heir to the crown, and his adherents were to be found everywhere—in the Army, in the Navy, in the Church, in both Houses of Parliament, and even in the councils of the Queen herself. But as a result of the Revolution Settlement of 1688, the balance of power rested, not with the people, nor with the Queen, nor even with her chosen advisers, but with the Whig oligarchy. The Electress Sophia did not appreciate fully the extent of this power; indeed it was impossible for any one who had not a close acquaintance with English politics to do so, but she was shrewd enough to see that with the Whigs was her only hope.

The situation became so desperate that she

[1] Letter of Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess of Orleans, to the Electress Sophia, 12th January, 1714.

determined to depart for once from her policy of outward abstention from English politics, and to take action independent of the Queen. The Whigs represented to her that the presence in England of some member of her family was imperatively necessary at this juncture. She agreed with them, and the Electoral Prince was most eager to go, and so was the Electoral Princess Caroline. A good deal has been written about the honourable conduct of the House of Hanover in refusing to embarrass Queen Anne, and certainly its conduct in this respect contrasted most favourably with that of William of Orange towards James the Second. But though this was true of the Elector George, who would do nothing behind the Queen's back, it could hardly be held to apply to the Electress Sophia and her grandson. The Elector, had he been consulted, would certainly have opposed the idea of the Electoral Prince going to England before himself, as he would have regarded it as another intrigue to supplant him in the favour of the English by his son; so it was decided not to consult him at all. The Electress Sophia, George Augustus and Caroline put their heads together, and with the advice of certain Whig emissaries who were at Hanover, and of Prince Eugene of Savoy and Leibniz, they resolved that the Electress should order Schütz, the Hanoverian Envoy in England, to demand the writ for the Electoral Prince to take his seat in the House of Lords as Duke of Cambridge. As they knew that it would be useless

to make such a request of the Queen, to whom it ought to have been made, Schütz was instructed to apply direct to the Lord Chancellor, in the hope that, when the knowledge of his demand got abroad, the Whig Lords would take the matter up, and make such a point of it that the Queen would be forced to give way. They little knew the strength of her resistance, for her determination to reign alone amounted to a mania. She would infinitely have preferred James's coming to that of George Augustus, if she had to endure the presence of one claimant or the other.

The demand was duly made. What followed is best told in the despatch which Bromley, the Secretary of State, wrote to Harley, a relative of Lord Oxford, who had been sent to Hanover a few days previously. Rumours had reached the Queen's ears that intrigues were on foot there, and Harley had been despatched to find out the state of feeling and temporise matters. But before he arrived at Hanover the Electress's orders had been given to Schütz, and the move which Anne hoped to prevent had been made. Bromley wrote :—

"Baron Schütz went to the Lord Chancellor, and said he was ordered by the Electress Sophia to demand a writ for the Duke of Cambridge to take his seat in Parliament, to which his Lordship answered that his writ was sealed with the writs of the rest of the peers, but he thought it his duty to acquaint the Queen before he delivered it. Her Majesty was very much surprised to hear that a

writ should be demanded for a prince of her blood, and whom she had created a peer, to sit in Parliament without any notice taken of it to her, and her Majesty looks upon Mr. Schütz's manner of transacting this affair to be so disrespectful to her, and so different from any instructions he could possibly have received from the Electress, that she thinks fit you should immediately represent it to the Electress, and to his Electoral Highness, and let them know it would be very acceptable to her Majesty to have this person recalled, who has affronted her in so high a degree."[1]

On receipt of this despatch Harley had an interview with the Elector, who assured him that he had given no instructions to Schütz, and he had acted without his knowledge or approval. The Electress Sophia took refuge in an evasion: "It is said that Madame l'Electrice wrote a letter to Schütz only to inquire whether the Duke of Cambridge might not have a writ as well as other peers".[2] So writes Harley home. He was charged with the less ungrateful task of making the Queen's compliments to the Electress and her family, and of asking them to state what they wanted. The Electress Sophia's hopes were raised again by Harley's request, and she and the Elector jointly drew up a memorial to the Queen setting forth their wishes. The Elector was very angry with his mother and his son, but where his interests were concerned he sank family differences. The

[1] Despatch of Bromley to Harley, 16th April, 1714.
[2] Harley's letter, 11th May, 1714.

memorial,[1] which did not err on the side of ambiguity, may thus be summarised :—

First. That the "Pretender" be forced to retire to Italy, seeing the danger that existed to the Protestant succession by his being allowed to remain so long in Lorraine.

Secondly. That the Queen should take measures to strengthen her Army and Fleet against an invasion of England in the interests of the "Pretender," and for the better security of her Royal person and the Protestant succession.

Thirdly. That the Queen should grant to those Protestant princes of the Electoral House, who had not yet got them, the usual titles accorded to princes of the blood of Great Britain.[2]

The Elector and Electress also expressed themselves strongly in favour of the establishment of some member of the electoral family in England. Harley promised to present the memorial to the Queen, and added that her answer to the several points would be sent by special envoy. He then departed from Hanover.

Meantime intrigue ran high in England. Bolingbroke had managed to persuade the Queen that Oxford had privily encouraged the demand of the

[1] Memorial of the Electress Dowager of Brunswick-Lüneburg and the Elector of Hanover to Queen Anne, 4th May, 1714.

[2] This would apply to the Elector, the Electoral Prince, Prince Ernest Augustus, brother of the Elector, and the young Prince Frederick, son of the Electoral Prince. It would exclude Prince Maximilian, brother of the Elector, who had become a Roman Catholic.

writ for the Electoral Prince. The Queen, excited by this, began to have doubts whether Harley, his relative, was to be trusted, and whether he was not betraying her interests at the Hanoverian Court. So, to make matters more explicit, she wrote a letter with her own hand to the Electress Sophia, reiterating in the strongest and most peremptory terms her objection to having any member of the electoral family in her dominions during her lifetime. Similar letters were also sent to the Elector and the Electoral Prince. The wording of them was generally ascribed to Bolingbroke.

When Anne's letters arrived at Hanover they created a feeling of consternation at Herrenhausen, at least in that wing of the palace which was occupied by the Electress Sophia. She, her grandson and Caroline were depressed beyond measure at the failure of their scheme, and incensed that the Queen should address them in so unceremonious a manner. A few days previously Leibniz, who was then at Vienna, had written to Caroline, saying:—

"God grant that the Electoral Prince may go to London soon, and that all possible success may attend him. I trust that your Highness may either accompany him or follow him immediately. Well-informed people here are persuaded that, in the event of his Highness going to London, the Corporation would not fail to make him a present, even if the Queen and Parliament did nothing. But if, against the expectation of the nation and the hopes of all well-affected people, the project comes to

nothing, or if it be thought at Hanover that the Prince's going would not yet be wise, it will be necessary to take great care to attribute the cause of the delay to the English Ministers' public and ill-founded resentment. In that case the nation in the end will force them to consent to the Prince's coming. But if the English Court can make the nation believe that there is dislike of, or indifference to, England at the Court of Hanover, it will have a bad effect, and the last state will be worse than the first."[1]

To this communication Caroline now replied, and her letter shows how keenly the Queen's letters had been taken to heart:—

"Alas! It is not the Electoral Prince's fault that, as desired by all honest folk, he has not gone to London before now. He has moved heaven and earth in the matter, and I have spoken about it very strongly to the Elector. We were in a state of uncertainty here until yesterday, when a courier arrived from the Queen with letters for the Electress, the Elector and the Electoral Prince, of which I can only say that they are of a violence worthy of my Lord Bolingbroke. The Electoral Prince is now in despair about going to take his seat in the English Parliament, as he had hoped. I do not know how the world will judge of the policy which keeps us still at Hanover. I do not so much regret the loss we personally may suffer, as that we may

[1] Letter of Leibniz to the Electoral Princess Caroline, Vienna, 24th May, 1714.

seem to have abandoned for the moment the cause of our religion, the liberty of Europe and so many of our brave and honest friends in England. I have only the consolation of knowing that everything possible has been done by the Prince to obtain the Queen's permission. The Electress joined him in this, and they now both intend to send the letters they have received from the Queen to their friends in England. I can find no comfort anywhere beyond the belief that Providence orders all things for our good. In fact I may say that never has any annoyance seemed to me so keen and insupportable as this. I fear for the health of the Electoral Prince, and perhaps even for his life."[1]

There was another life, more valuable than that of the Electoral Prince, trembling in the balance. The day after Caroline wrote this letter was a fatal day to the Electress Sophia. She, the "Heiress of Britain," had felt the Queen's rebuff far more than her grandson or Caroline; her haughty spirit resented the manner in which she was addressed by her royal cousin of England, and her wounded pride and her thwarted ambition combined to throw her into an extraordinary state of agitation, which at her age she was unable to bear. Mollineux, an agent of the Duke of Marlborough who was at Hanover at the time, declared later that the shock of "these vile letters has broken her heart and brought her in sorrow to the grave".

[1] The Electoral Princess Caroline to Leibniz, Hanover, 7/17th June, 1714.

The Queen of England's letter was delivered to the Electress on Wednesday evening about seven o'clock when she was playing cards. She got up from the card-table, and when she had read the letter, she became greatly agitated, and went out and walked up and down the garden for about three hours. The next morning she was not very well, but though still very much annoyed she recovered during the day, and on Friday she had apparently regained her composure. Meanwhile she determined that the Queen's letters to herself and her grandson should be published, so that the world in general, and her friends in England in particular, might know the true state of affairs. The Elector refused to join them in this, and withheld the Queen's letter to himself. She dined in public with the Elector that day as usual, and late in the afternoon went out for her walk in the garden of Herrenhausen with the Electoral Princess and her suite. She began to talk to Caroline about the letters, and gradually became more and more excited, walking very fast. The most trustworthy account of what followed is given in the following despatch of D'Alais, the English envoy :—

"The Electress felt indisposed on Wednesday evening, but she was better on Friday morning, and even wrote to her niece, the Duchess-dowager of Orleans. The same evening, about seven o'clock, whilst she was walking in the garden of Herrenhausen, and going towards the orangery, those with her perceived that she suddenly became pale, and

she fell forwards in a fainting fit. The Electoral Princess and the Countess von Pickenbourg, who were with her, supported her on either side, and the chamberlain of her Electoral Highness helped them to keep her from falling. The Elector, who was in the garden hard by, heard their cries, and ran forward. He found her Electoral Highness unconscious, and he put some *poudre d'or* in her mouth. Servants were promptly called, and between them they carried the Electress to her room, where she was bled. But she was already dead, and only a few drops of blood came out. The Electress was in the eighty-fourth year of her age. The doctors say that she has died of apoplexy. On the Saturday night they carried her body into the chapel of the château."[1]

Thus died one of the greatest princesses and most remarkable women of her time. The Electress Sophia was a worthy ancestress of our good Queen Victoria, whom in some respects, notably her devotion to duty, and her large and liberal way of looking at things, she closely resembled. No English historian has yet done justice to the eventful life of Sophia of Hanover, who missed, by a bare two months, becoming Queen of England. It was largely in consequence of her able policy, maintained throughout a critical period, no less than her Stuart descent, that her descendants came to occupy the English throne.

The Electress Sophia's death was soon known

[1] D'Alais's Despatch (translation), Hanover, 12th June, 1714. This has not before been published.

in England, but no official notice was taken of it until Bothmar arrived to announce it formally in July. The choice of Bothmar for this mission shows that the Elector George, now heir-presumptive, was manifesting more interest in the English succession. Bothmar had been in England before, and was by no means a favourite with Bolingbroke and the Tories. At the same time, through Bothmar, George caused a fresh instrument of Regency to be drawn up in the event of the Queen's death, containing his nominations of the Lords of the Regency. This document was entrusted to Bothmar, and the seals were to be broken when the Queen died. On receiving the Elector's notification of his mother's death, Queen Anne commanded a general mourning, and very reluctantly inserted George's name in the prayer-book as next heir to the throne in place of that of the late Electress Sophia. The death of the Electress came to the Queen as a relief. She regarded her as one embarrassment the less, for she had heard of her cousin George's indifference to the English succession, and she anticipated comparatively little trouble from him. Sophia's death also enabled her to ignore some awkward points in the memorial, which had now reached her by the hands of Harley, such as had reference to the Electress's English household and pension. But though Sophia was dead, the memorial had to be answered. A reply was drawn up in writing, and the Earl of Clarendon, the Queen's first cousin, of whose attachment to her

person she had no manner of doubt, was despatched as Envoy Extraordinary to Hanover—the second special mission within a few months.

The Queen's answer to the Hanoverian memorial ran as follows :—

"That her Majesty has used her instances to have the Pretender removed out of Lorraine, and since the last addresses of Parliament has repeated them, and has writ herself to the Duke of Lorraine to press it in the strongest terms. This her Majesty hath done to get him removed, but it can't be imagined it is in her power to prescribe where the Pretender shall go, or by whom he shall be received. His being removed out of France is more than was provided for by the Peace at Ryswick. Correspondence with the Pretender is by law high treason, and it is her Majesty's interest and care to have this law strictly executed.

"The vain hopes entertained at Bar-le-Duc and the reports thence are not to be wondered at. Her Majesty thinks herself fully secured, as well by treaties as by the duty and affection of her people, against all attempt whatsoever. Besides these securities, her Majesty has a settled militia and such other force as her Parliament, to whose consideration she has referred that matter, judged sufficient for the safety of her kingdom. And it cannot be unknown that a standing army in time of peace, without consent of Parliament, is contrary to the fundamental laws of this realm. Her Majesty is so far from being unfurnished with a fleet that

she has at this time more ships at sea, and ready to be put to sea, than any other power in Europe.

"Her Majesty looks upon it to be very unnecessary that one of the Electoral family should reside in Great Britain to take care of the security of her Royal person, of her kingdom, and of the Protestant succession, as expressed in the memorial. This, God and the laws have entrusted to her Majesty alone, and to admit any person into a share of these cares with her Majesty would be dangerous to the public tranquillity, as it is inconsistent with the constitution of the monarchy.

"When her Majesty considers the use that has been endeavoured to be made of the titles she has already conferred, she has little encouragement to grant more. Granting titles of honour in the last reign to persons of foreign birth gave such dissatisfaction to the nation as produced a provision in the Act of Parliament whereby the succession is established in the Electoral House, that when the limitation in that Act shall take effect, no person born out of the kingdom of England, Scotland and Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging, though naturalised or made a denizen (except such as are born of English parents), shall be capable to be of the Privy Council, or a member of either House of Parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of trust, or to have a grant of land, tenements or hereditaments from the crown to himself, or to any other in trust for him."[1]

[1] The Queen's Answer to the Memorial of their Electoral Highnesses the late Electress Dowager and the Elector of Hanover, June, 1714.

Clarendon arrived at Hanover on July 26th, 1714, imbued with a strong sense of the importance of his mission, and requested an audience at once. But he found, to his surprise, that the Elector was in no hurry to receive him, and could not see him for more than a week. At last he had audience. The account of that interview and what followed is best given in his own words :—

"On Saturday last I had my first audience of the Elector at noon at Herrenhausen. He received me in a room where he was alone; a gentleman of the Court came to my lodgings here, with two of the Elector's coaches, and carried me to Herrenhausen. I was met at my alighting out of the coach by Monsieur d'Haremberg, Marshal of the Court, and at the top of the stairs by the Chevalier Reden, second chamberlain (the Count de Platen, great chamberlain, being sick); he conducted me through three rooms, to the room where the Elector was, who met me at the door, and being returned three or four steps into that room, he stopped, and the door was shut. I then delivered my credentials to him, and made him a compliment from the Queen, to which he answered that he had always had the greatest veneration imaginable for the Queen, that he was always ready to acknowledge the great obligations he and his family have to her Majesty, and that he desired nothing more earnestly than to entertain a good correspondence with her. . . .

"I then delivered to him the Queen's answer to his memorial, and the other letter, and I spoke upon

all the heads contained in my instructions, and in your letter of the 22nd of June, O.S. When I told him that, as the Queen had already done all that could be done to secure the succession to her crown to his family, so she expected that if he had any reason to suspect designs are carrying on to disappoint it, he should speak plainly upon that subject, he interrupted me and said these words: 'I have never believed that the Queen cherished any designs against the interests of my family,' and 'I am not aware of having given her Majesty any reason to suspect that I wished to do anything against her interests, or which might displease her in any way. I love not to do such things. The Queen did me the honour to write to me, and ask me to let her know what I thought would be of advantage to the succession. We gave a written memorial to Mr. Harley to which I have yet had no reply.' I told him I had just then had the honour to deliver him an answer to the memorial, and that if, when he had perused that answer, he desired to have any part explained, I did believe I should be able to do it to his satisfaction. Then I proceeded to speak upon the other points, and when I came to mention Schütz's demanding the writ for the Duke of Cambridge, he said these words: 'I hope that the Queen does not believe that it was done by my commands. I assure you it was done unknown to me; the late Electress wrote to Schütz without my knowledge to ask him to find out why the Prince had not received his writ, which she believed was

sent to all peers, and instead of that he demanded the writ even without the Electress's commands. I would do nothing to annoy the Queen to whom we owe so many obligations.' My speaking to him and the answers he made took up something above an hour.

"Then I had audience of the Electoral Prince and of Duke Ernest, the Elector's brother, in the same room, and then of the Electoral Princess. After that I had the honour to dine with them all, and after dinner, here in the town, I had audience of the Electoral Princess's son and three daughters. At dinner the Elector seemed to be in very good humour, talked to me several times, asked many questions about England, and seemed very willing to be informed. It is very plain that he knows very little of our Constitution, and seems to be sensible that he has been imposed upon. The Electoral Prince told me he thought himself very happy that the Queen had him in her thoughts, that he should be very glad if it were in his power to convince the Queen how grateful a sense he had of all her favours. Duke Ernest said the Queen did him a great deal of honour to remember him, that he most heartily wished the continuance of her Majesty's health, and hoped no one of his family would ever be so ungrateful as to forget the very great obligations they all had to her. The Electoral Princess said she was very glad to hear the Queen was well, she hoped she would enjoy good health many years, that her kindness to this family was so

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very great that they could never make sufficient acknowledgments for it. Thus I have acquainted you with all that passed at the first audience."[1]

We find Clarendon writing again a few days later: "The Elector has said to some person here that I have spoken very plain, and he can understand me, and indeed I have spoken plain language on all occasions. I hope that will not be found a fault in England."[2]

Clarendon soon had reason to regret his speaking so "very plain," for at the very hour when the English envoy was haranguing the Elector, Queen Anne was dead. The sword so long suspended had fallen at last. The Queen had frequently declared in the course of the last month that the perpetual contentions of her Ministers would cause her death. She had striven to end the bitter strife between Oxford and Bolingbroke by compelling the former to give up the Treasurer's staff, which he did on Tuesday, July 27th. Thus Oxford had fallen; Bolingbroke had triumphed, but his triumph was not to last long. The same night a council was called at nine o'clock in the evening, over which the Queen presided; but the removal of Oxford seemed only to add fuel to the flames. The partisans of the displaced Minister and those of Bolingbroke, regardless of the presence of the Queen, her weakness, the consideration due to her as a woman, and

[1] Clarendon's Despatch, Hanover, 7th August, 1714. The Elector's words are translated from the French.

[2] Clarendon's Despatch, Hanover, 10th August, 1714.

the respect due to her office, violently raged at one another until two o'clock in the morning, and the scene was only closed by the tears and anguish of the Queen, who at last swooned and had to be carried out of the council chamber. Another council was called for the next day; the recriminations were as fierce as before, nothing was settled, and the council was again suspended by the alarming illness of the Queen.

A third council was summoned for the Friday. The Queen wept, and said, "I shall never survive it". And so it proved, for when the hour appointed for the council drew nigh, the royal victim, worn out with sickness of mind and body, and dreading the strife, was seized with an apoplectic fit. She was carried to bed, and her state was soon seen to be hopeless. The news of the Queen's illness got known to Bolingbroke and his friends first, probably through Lady Masham, and they hurried to the palace. Lady Masham burst in upon them from the royal chamber in the utmost disorder, crying: "Alas! my lords, we are undone, entirely ruined—the Queen is a dead woman; all the world cannot save her". The suddenness of this blow stunned the Jacobites; they had been so eager to grasp at power that they had killed their best friend. All was confusion and distracted counsel. The Duke of Ormonde declared that if the Queen were conscious, and would name her brother her successor, he would answer for the soldiers. But the Queen was not conscious, and they hesitated to take a

decisive step. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, was all for action, and then and there offered to go forth in full pontificals and proclaim King James at Charing Cross and the Royal Exchange. But the others resolved to temporise and call a formal council for the morrow to see what could be done. Meantime the Queen was sinking, and her only intelligible words were: "My brother! Oh! my poor brother, what will become of you?" There is no doubt that Bolingbroke, Ormonde and Atterbury, had they been given time, would have tried to obtain from the Queen the nomination of James as her successor, and have acted accordingly, but time was not given them. The favourable moment passed, and the Whigs, and those Tories who favoured the Hanoverian succession, were alert.

Before the assembled council could get to business next morning, the door opened, and the Dukes of Argyll and Somerset entered the room. These two great peers, representing the Whigs of Scotland and England respectively, announced that though they had not been summoned to the council, yet, on hearing of the Queen's danger, they felt bound to hasten thither. While Bolingbroke and Ormonde sat silent, fearing mischief, afraid to bid the intruding peers to retire, the Duke of Shrewsbury rose and welcomed them, and asked them to take seats at the council table. It was then clear to the Jacobites that the presence of Argyll and Somerset was part of a concerted plan with Shrewsbury. The plan rapidly developed. On

the motion of Somerset, seconded by Argyll, Shrewsbury was nominated Lord Treasurer, but he declined the office unless the Queen herself appointed him. The council then sought audience with the dying Queen. She was sinking fast, but she retained enough consciousness to give the white wand into the hands of Shrewsbury, and bade him, with the sweet voice which was her greatest charm, to "use it for the good of my people". Then indeed the Jacobites knew that all was over, for Shrewsbury was a firm adherent of the House of Hanover. Bolingbroke and Ormonde withdrew in confusion, and the "best cause in the world," as Atterbury said, "was lost for want of spirit".

The Whig statesmen were not slow to follow up their advantage. They concentrated several regiments around and in London, they ordered the recall of troops from Ostend, they sent a fleet to sea, they obtained possession of all the ports, and did everything necessary to check a rising or an invasion in favour of James. Craggs was despatched to Hanover to tell the Elector that the Queen was dying, and the council determined to proclaim him King the moment the Queen's breath was out of her body. They had not long to wait. The Queen died early next morning, August 1st, and on the same day the seals of the document drawn up by George appointing the Council of Regency were broken in the presence of the Hanoverian representative, Bothmar. Without delay the heralds proclaimed that "The high and

mighty Prince, George, Elector of Brunswick and Lüneburg, is, by the death of Queen Anne of blessed memory, become our lawful and rightful liege lord, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith". The people heard the proclamation without protest, and some even were found to cry, "God save King George".

The moment the Queen died two more messengers were despatched to Hanover, one, a State messenger, to Lord Clarendon, the other, a special envoy, Lord Dorset, to do homage to the new King on behalf of the Lords of the Regency, and to attend him on his journey to England. Hanover was in a state of great excitement. Craggs had arrived on August 5th, bringing the news of the Queen's serious illness. The messenger to Lord Clarendon arrived next day late at night, and found that the envoy was not at his lodgings, but supping with a charming lady. But the news brooked of no delay, and seeking out Clarendon, the messenger handed him his despatches, which ordered him to acquaint George with the death of the Queen. There could be no more unwelcome tidings for Lord Clarendon. "It is the only misfortune I had to fear in this world," he exclaimed. Anne was his first cousin, and all his hopes were bound up with Bolingbroke and the Jacobite Tories, whose day, he shrewdly guessed, was now over. He forthwith called his coach, and late though the hour was, drove off to Herrenhausen, which he reached at two o'clock in the morning. George was asleep

when Clarendon arrived, but the envoy dared to penetrate into his chamber, and, falling on his knees by the bedside, "acquainted his Majesty that so great a diadem was fallen to him," and asked his commands. "He told me I had best stay till he goes, and then I was dismissed."[1]

George's curtness is explained by the fact that he had heard the great news already. Eager though Clarendon was, another had been before him. On August 1st Bothmar had despatched his secretary, Godike, in hot haste to Hanover, who had reached Herrenhausen earlier the same evening (August 5th). Still, Clarendon could claim the honour of being the first Englishman to bend the knee to King George. It availed him little in the future, for George never forgave him his "plain speaking," and Clarendon, finding all avenues of public advancement closed to him, retired into private life.

Lord Dorset arrived at Hanover the next day, bringing the news of George the First's proclamation and despatches from the Lords of the Regency informing the King that a fleet had been sent to escort him from Holland to England, where his loyal subjects were impatiently awaiting his arrival. Soon Hanover was thronged with English, all hastening to pay their homage to the risen sun of Hanover, and to breathe assurances of loyalty and devotion. George received them and their homage with stolid indifference. He showed no exultation at his accession to the mighty throne of England, and was careful

[1] Clarendon's Despatch, 10/17th August, 1714.

not to commit himself by word or deed. His policy at this time was guided, not by anything that the Lords of the Regency might say or do, but by the secret despatches which his trusted agent, Bothmar, was forwarding him from England. Had Bothmar informed him that his proclamation was other than peaceable, or that rebellion was imminent, it is probable that George would never have quitted Hanover. But as he was apparently proclaimed with acclamation, there was no help for it but to go. "The late King, I am fully persuaded," writes Dean Lockier soon after the death of George the First, "would never have stirred a step if there had been any strong opposition."

George Augustus and Caroline had shown themselves eager to go to England, but when the great news came, they were careful to dissemble their eagerness, lest the King, mindful of their intrigues, should take it into his head to leave them behind at Hanover. Apparently he came to the conclusion that they would be less dangerous if he took them with him; so he commanded George Augustus to make ready to depart with him, and told Caroline to follow a month later with all her children except the eldest, Prince Frederick Louis. Leibniz hurried back from Vienna on hearing of Anne's death, and prayed hard to go to England, but he was ordered to stay at Hanover and finish his history of the Brunswick princes. This was a bitter disappointment, and in vain Caroline pleaded for him. The King knew that she and the late Electress had

employed him in their intrigues, and he was determined to leave so dangerous an adherent behind. Leibniz had sore reason to regret the loss of the Electress Sophia.

If his loyal subjects in England were impatient to receive him, the King was not equally impatient to make their acquaintance. He had a good deal to do at Hanover before leaving, and he refused to be hurried, however urgent English affairs might be. He conferred some parting favours on his beloved electorate, and vested its government in a council presided over by his brother, Ernest Augustus. George left Hanover with regret, comforting his bereaved subjects with assurances that he would come back as soon as he possibly could, and that he would always have their interest at heart. Both of these promises he kept—at the expense of England.

A month after the Queen's death the new King departed for the Hague, without any ceremony. He took with him a train of Hanoverians, including Bernstorff, his Prime Minister, and Robethon, a councillor, two Turks, Mustapha and Mahomet, and his two mistresses, Schulemburg and Kielmansegge. The former was even more reluctant than her master to quit Hanover, and feared for the King's safety. But George consoled her with the grim assurance that "in England all the king-killers are on my side," and like the others she came to regard England as a land of promise wherein she might enrich herself. Kielmansegge was eager to go to

England, but she did not find it so easy, as she was detained at Hanover by her debts, which George would not pay. After some difficulty she managed to pacify her creditors by promises of the gold she would send them from his Majesty's new dominions; they let her go, and she caught up the King at the Hague. The Countess Platen did not accompany him. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu says that this was due to the enmity of Bernstorff, who hated her because she had obtained the post of cofferer for her favourite, the younger Craggs. "Bernstorff was afraid that she might meddle in the disposition of places that he was willing to keep in his own hands, and he represented to the King that the Roman Catholic religion that she professed was an insuperable bar to her appearance in the Court of England, at least so early; but he gave her private hopes that things might be so managed as to make her admittance easy, when the King was settled in his new dominions."

George was warmly welcomed at the Hague, where he stayed a fortnight, transacting business, receiving Ministers and Ambassadors, and waiting for the remainder of his Hanoverian suite to join him. At the Hague he determined that Bolingbroke should be dismissed from all his offices, and appointed Lord Townshend Secretary of State in his place. On September 16th George embarked at Oranje Polder, in the yacht *Peregrine*, and, accompanied by a squadron of twenty ships, set sail for England.

BOOK II.

PRINCESS OF WALES.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMING OF THE KING.

1714.

GEORGE THE FIRST landed at Greenwich on Saturday, September 18th, 1714, at six o'clock in the evening. The arrival of the royal yacht was celebrated by the booming of guns, the ringing of bells, the flying of flags, and the cheers of a vast crowd of people, who had assembled along the riverside. A great number of privy councillors and lords, spiritual and temporal, hurried down to Greenwich, eager to kneel in the mud, if need be, and kiss the hand of the new sovereign. This was not the first visit of George to England; he had come here thirty-four years before, as a suitor for the hand of Queen Anne, then Princess Anne of York, whose throne he was now to fill. On that occasion his barque was left stranded all night at Greenwich, and no one was sent from Charles the Second's court to meet him or bid him welcome. If he had any sense of the irony of events, he must have been struck by the contrast between then and now, when he landed on the same spot, and gazed at the servile crowd of place-hunters who elbowed and jostled their way into the royal

presence. Tories and Whigs were there, and Jacobites too, all fervent in their expressions of loyalty, which George knew how to value for what they were worth. He wished them and their lip service far away, for he was both tired and cross; he had had a rough voyage, and the yacht had been detained some hours off Gravesend by a thick fog. He dismissed them all with scant ceremony and went to bed.

The next day, Sunday, King George held his first levée, at which he particularly noticed Marlborough and the Whig Lords, but ignored Ormonde and Lord Chancellor Harcourt altogether, and barely noticed Oxford, "of whom your Majesty has heard me speak," said Dorset in presenting him. Bolingbroke was not received at all. The Whigs were jubilant; it was evident that the King had no intention of conciliating the Tories. As it was Sunday, a great many citizens came down from London by road and water to catch a glimpse of the new King, and in the afternoon a large crowd assembled outside the palace of Greenwich and cheered for hours. To quote one of the journals of the day: "His Majesty and the Prince were graciously pleased to expose themselves some time at the windows of their palace to satisfy the impatient curiosity of the King's loving subjects".[1]

On the morrow, Monday, George the First made his public entry into London, and his "loving subjects" had ample opportunity of seeing their

[1] *The Weekly Journal*, 22nd September, 1714.

Sovereign from Hanover, whose "princely virtues," in the words of the Address of the loyal Commons, "gave them a certain prospect of future happiness". It was king's weather. The September sun was shining brightly when at two o'clock in the afternoon the procession set out from Greenwich Park. It was not a military procession after the manner of royal pageants in more recent years, though a certain number of soldiers took part in it, but it was an imposing procession, and more representative of the nation than any military display that could have been devised. In it the order of precedence set forth by the Heralds' Office was strictly followed. The coaches of esquires came first, but as no esquire was permitted to take part in the procession who could not afford a coach drawn by six horses and emblazoned with his arms, it could not fully represent the untitled aristocracy of England. Then followed the knights bachelors in their coaches, with panels painted yellow in compliment to the King, though in truth he was of a very different calibre to the last foreign monarch who affected that colour, William of Orange. Then came the Solicitor-General and the Attorney-General, and after them the baronets and younger sons of barons and viscounts. Then followed the majesty of the law as represented by the Barons of the Exchequer, his Majesty's Judges, the Lord Chief Justice, and the Master of the Rolls. The Privy Councillors, such as were not noble, came next, and then the eldest sons of barons, the younger sons of earls, the eldest sons of viscounts, and, all

by himself, the Speaker of the House of Commons, in wig and gown. The barons and the bishops came next, fully robed, followed by the younger sons of dukes, the eldest sons of marquesses, the earls, the Lord Steward, the two lords who jointly held the office of Earl Marshal, the eldest sons of dukes, the marquesses, the Lord Great Chamberlain, the dukes, the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord President of the Council, the Lord High Treasurer, the Archbishop of York and the Lord Chancellor. From some unexplained cause the Archbishop of Canterbury was absent.

Then, the climax and focus of all this splendour, came King George himself and Prince George Augustus in an enormous glass coach, decorated with gold, emblazoned with the royal arms, and drawn by eight horses with postillions. The Duke of Northumberland, the Gold Staff, and Lord Dorset, who had now been made a gentleman of the bedchamber, were on the front seat. The King leaned forward and bowed to the cheering crowds from time to time, with his hand upon his heart, but his countenance showed never a smile. The Prince, on the other hand, was all smiles, but having been commanded by his royal sire not to bow, he had perforce to sit upright, and content himself with smiling. Immediately after the royal coach came other coaches bearing the King's suite of faithful Hanoverians, including his two mistresses *en titre*, Schulemburg and Kielmansegge, whose quaint appearance was the signal of some ribald

remarks from the mob, which, fortunately for the German ladies, they did not understand. The whole of the way was lined with cheering crowds, and men and boys climbed up the trees along the route to wave flags and shout "God save the King".

As the procession entered London cannon roared from the Tower. There was a temporary halt in Southwark, where the Lord Mayor and City Fathers, in brave array, were drawn up to meet the King. The Recorder stepped up to the royal coach and read a long speech, in which he assured his Majesty of the impatience with which the citizens of London, and his subjects generally, awaited "his Royal presence amongst them to secure those invaluable blessings which they promised themselves from a Prince of the most illustrious merit". The King listened stolidly, and bowed his head from time to time, or gave utterance to a grunt, which presumably was intended to convey the royal approval, but as George understood barely a word of English, the loyal address could hardly have been intelligible to him. The procession then moved slowly over London Bridge, through the City, by St. Paul's, where four thousand children sang "God save the King," and so wended its way to St. James's. The roadway was lined with troops, and people looked down from windows and balconies, shouted and threw flowers; flags waved and draperies hung down from nearly every house, triumphal arches crossed the streets, the bells of the churches were ringing, and the fountains ran with

wine. But the King throughout the day remained stolid and unmoved; the English crowd might shout for King George as loud as they pleased, but he knew full well in his heart that, given the same show and a general holiday, they would have shouted as loud for King James.

It was eight o'clock in the evening before the procession broke up at St. James's Palace, and even then the festivities were not over, for bonfires were lighted in the streets and squares, oxen roasted whole, and barrels of beer broached for the people, who enjoyed themselves in high good humour until the small hours of the morning. The day was not to end without some blood being spilled. A dispute took place that night at St. James's between one Aldworth, the Tory member of Parliament for Windsor, and Colonel Chudleigh, a truculent Whig. The colonel called Aldworth, who had been in the royal procession, a Jacobite. Aldworth resented this as an insult, and, both being the worse for wine, the quarrel grew. Nothing would settle it but to fight a duel with swords, and the pair set off at once with seconds to Marylebone Fields. Aldworth was killed, "which is no great wonder," writes an eye-witness, "for he had such a weakness in both his arms that he could not stretch them, and this from being a child it is suppos'd not to be a secret to Chudleigh".[1]

The King and Prince slept that night in St.

[1] Lord Berkeley of Stratton to Lord Strafford, 24th September, 1714. Wentworth Papers.

James's Palace. Did the ghosts of their Stuart ancestors mock their slumbers?

The next day King George held a levée, which was largely attended, and the day after he presided over a meeting of the Privy Council, when George Augustus was created Prince of Wales. In the patent the King declared that his "most dear son is a Prince whose eminent filial piety hath always endeared him to us". Yet, though the Prince was nominally a member of the Privy Council, the King was careful not to allow him the slightest influence in political affairs, or to admit him to his confidence or to that of his Ministers.

We get glimpses of the King during the first few weeks of his reign in contemporary letters of the period. We find him and the Prince supping with the Duke of Marlborough, whose levées were more largely attended than ever, and whose popularity was far greater than that of his royal guests. The duke improved the occasion by offering to sell the Prince of Wales Marlborough House, and showed him how easily it might be joined to St. James's Palace by a gallery; the King would not hear of it.[1] We also find the King supping at Madame Kielmansegge's with Lady Cowper, for whom he evinced undisguised, if not altogether proper admiration, and the lovely Duchess of Shrewsbury, whose conversation, if we may believe Lady Cowper, "though she had a wonderful art of entertaining and diverting people, would sometimes exceed the

[1] Wentworth Papers.

bounds of decency". On this occasion she entertained his Majesty by mocking the way the King of France ate, telling him that he ate twenty things at a meal, and ticking them off on her fingers. Whereupon the astute Lady Cowper said: "Sire, the duchess forgets that he eats a good deal more than that". "What does he eat, then?" said the King. "Sire," Lady Cowper answered, "he devours his people, and if Providence had not led your Majesty to the throne, he would be devouring us also." Whereupon the King turned to the duchess and said, "Did you hear what she said?" and he did Lady Cowper the honour of repeating her words to many people, which made the Duchess of Shrewsbury very jealous.

The Duchess of Shrewsbury was by birth an Italian, the Marchesa Paleotti, and scandal said that she had been the duke's mistress before she became his wife. The Duchess of Marlborough made many slighting remarks about her when she first appeared at Queen Anne's Court, where she was coldly received. But after the Hanoverian accession she came to the front and stood high in the favour of King George, who loved a lady who was at once lively and broad in her conversation. Lady Wentworth declared that "the Duchess of Shrewsbury will devour the King, for she will not let any one speak to him but herself, and she says she rivals Madame Kielmansegge". Be that as it may, the King found great pleasure in her society, and often went to her little supper parties to play "sixpenny

ombre". She had a great advantage over the English ladies in that she could speak admirable French. The King later obtained for her a post in the household of the Princess of Wales, not without some reluctance on the part of the Princess.

The King lost no time in forming his Government. All the members, with the possible exception of Lord Nottingham, the President of the Council, who, despite his leaning to High Church principles, had long been identified with the Whigs, were of the Whig party. Lord Townshend was confirmed in Bolingbroke's place as chief Secretary of State, and must henceforth be regarded as Prime Minister. He was not a statesman of first-rate ability, but he was a just man and free from the prevailing taint of corruption; his considerable position among the Whigs had been strengthened by his marriage with Robert Walpole's sister. Robert Walpole was given the minor appointment of Paymaster-General to the Forces, but he was promoted the following year to the post of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The second Secretary of State, James Stanhope (afterwards Earl Stanhope), was a much stronger personality than Townshend; he had shown himself a dashing soldier, and he was an accomplished scholar.

These three men were the dominant Ministers in the Government. The Duke of Shrewsbury, who had been more instrumental than any man in England in bringing George over from Hanover, resigned the Treasurer's staff, and the Treasury was placed

in commission, with Lord Halifax at its head. Shrewsbury was appointed Lord Chamberlain, Lord Cowper became Lord Chancellor, and the Duke of Argyll commander of the forces in Scotland. Marlborough was again entrusted with the offices of Commander-in-Chief and Master of the Ordnance; the King was afraid to overlook him, but it was evident that he did not trust him, and so gave him only the shadow of power. Events showed that his instinct was right, for even now, while holding high office under the Hanoverian dynasty, Marlborough lent a large sum of money to James, which must materially have helped forward the Jacobite rising a year later. Like most English politicians of that day, he was uncertain whether Stuart or Guelph would ultimately triumph, and, having no fixed principles, he determined to be well with both sides.

Perhaps the most important of the King's actions at this time was his selection of seven great officers of state, to form the Cabinet Council of the Sovereign. It created a precedent which has lasted to this day, though now the Cabinet, swollen in numbers, has lost much of its former collective authority. Another and equally important precedent was set by George the First. At his first council, he frankly told his Ministers that he knew very little about the English Constitution, and he should therefore place himself entirely in their hands, and govern through them. "Then," he added, "you will become completely answerable for everything I do."

In pursuance of this policy, and also because he could speak no English, the King determined not to preside over the meetings of his council, as all previous English monarchs had done, and from the beginning of his reign until now, Cabinet Councils have been held without the presence of the Sovereign. Of course the King retained some influence in the councils of the realm, especially with regard to foreign policy, but this power was exercised by George the First, largely by indirect methods, on which we shall presently have occasion to dwell.

The King, however, showed himself by no means a man to be ignored; he was a shrewd if cynical judge of character, and though by no means clever, he avoided many pitfalls into which a more brilliant man might have fallen. He had always to be reckoned with. He kept the appointments in his own hands, and his care to exclude the great Whig Lords from his Government, in favour of younger men with less influence, showed that he was determined not to be dictated to. But his policy of forming his first Administration entirely of Whigs made him of necessity the King, not of the whole nation, but of a faction. George the First was not a great statesman, and his little knowledge of English affairs made it difficult for him to include in his first Government some of the more moderate among the Tories. Coalition Governments had failed under William the Third and Anne, and were hardly likely to succeed under George the First. But the total exclusion of the Tories from office undoubtedly had a

bad effect upon the nation at large. There were many Tories who were loyal to the Hanoverian succession; there were others who were determined to uphold the monarchy and the Church, even though the monarch was a German prince with, to them, scarce a shadow of title to the throne. These men, who represented a large and influential class of the community, were now left without any voice in the councils of the nation. The immediate result was to drive many waverers over to Jacobitism, and to render others apathetic in upholding the new dynasty.

Many office-seekers at first paid their court to the Prince of Wales, but they soon perceived that the King allowed him no voice in appointments, except the purely personal ones of his own household. The Prince thus early found interested friends among the English nobility who were willing to urge his claims to a larger share in the regality—for a consideration. His love of intrigue induced him to lend a ready ear, and he soon had a trustworthy ally in the person of his consort Caroline, who had now set out from Hanover.

"The Princess, Consort to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales," writes a Hanoverian gazette, "having received letters from the Prince whereby he desires her to follow him immediately to England, has resolved to send her baggage forward next Saturday for Holland, and on Monday following two of the Princesses, her daughters, will set out at the Hague, and she herself will depart Thursday following, in order to go to England. The Duchess

of Celle is expected at Herrenhausen to-morrow night, and the Duchess of Wolfenbüttel the next day, to take their leave of her Royal Highness."[1]

Caroline arrived at the Hague a few days later, and was formally received by the Earls of Strafford and Albemarle and their countesses, and by the deputies who were appointed by the States of Holland to welcome her and attend her during her stay. She was accompanied by two of her children, the Princesses Anne and Amelia; the youngest, Princess Caroline, had been left behind on account of indisposition, and her eldest child, Prince Frederick, by command of the King remained at Hanover.

Caroline was in the highest spirits at the realisation of her hopes, and began with zest to play her new rôle of Princess of Wales. That night, tired from her long journey, she supped in private, but the next morning she received a deputation from the States-General, and in the afternoon, the weather being fine, she drove in the Voorhout, or fashionable promenade, attended by a numerous train of coaches. In the evening the Princess held a drawing-room, which was largely attended by all the persons of distinction at the Hague. On the morrow she gave audience to the French Ambassador and other foreign ministers, and to many lords and ladies, who, we are told, "could not enough applaud the agreeable reception they found, and the admirable presence of mind of her Royal Highness. The two Princesses, her daughters, were not less the subject

[1] The *Leiden Gazette*, Hanover, 29th October, 1714.

of admiration for the excellent behaviour they showed, much above what their age could promise, one being but three and a half and the other but five years old."[1]

The Princess of Wales stayed at the Hague three days, and then set out for Rotterdam, Lord Strafford, the English envoy at the Hague, attending her part of the way. At Rotterdam the Princess embarked on the royal yacht, *Mary*, and, escorted by a squadron of English men-of-war, set sail for England. Her coming was eagerly awaited in London. To quote again: "By the favourable wind since the embarkation of Madam the Princess of Wales, it is not doubted that her Royal Highness, with the Princesses, her daughters, will soon safely arrive. The whole conversation of the town turns upon the charms, sweetness and good manner of this excellent princess, whose generous treatment of everybody, who has had the honour to approach her, is such that none have come from her without being obliged by some particular expression of her favour."[2]

The Princess of Wales landed at Margate at four o'clock on the morning of October 15th, and was met there by the Prince, who, accompanied by the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Argyll, had travelled by coach from London to welcome her. The Prince and Princess slept that night at Rochester, and on Wednesday, in the afternoon, they made a

[1] *The Daily Courant*, 19th October, 1714.
[2] *Ibid.*, 12th October, 1714.

progress through the city of London to St. James's. The Tower guns were fired as they came over London Bridge, and those in the park when they arrived at St. James's Palace. At night there were illuminations and bonfires, and other demonstrations of joy.

It was at once made manifest that the policy of the Prince and Princess of Wales was to please everybody. They were ready of access, and courteous to all with whom they came into contact. "I find all backward in speaking to the King, but ready enough to speak to the Prince," writes Peter Wentworth.[1] The night after her arrival the Princess made her first appearance at the English Court. Wentworth writes: "The Princess came into the drawing-room at seven o'clock and stayed until ten. There was a basset table and ombre tables, but the Princess sitting down to piquet, all the company flocked about to that table and the others were not used." She charmed all who were presented to her by her grace and affability. The next morning the Prince and Princess took a walk round St. James's Park, with the Duchess of Bolton, the Duchess of Shrewsbury and Lady Nottingham in attendance. The Mall was then the fashionable promenade, and they were followed by a large concourse of people. It was jealously noted that the Princess talked much to Lady Nottingham, whose High Church views were well known, and it was rumoured that she would make her the governess of her children, a

[1] Peter Wentworth to Lord Strafford, 18th October, 1714.

post for which Lady Nottingham must surely have been qualified by experience, as she had given birth to no less than thirty children of her own. For the next few days the Princess of Wales appeared at the drawing-rooms every evening, and received in her own apartments as well; indeed she complained that she was so beset that she had scarcely time to get her clothes together for the coronation.

The coronation of George the First took place on October 20th, 1714, and was largely attended, it being remarked that no such a gathering of lords, spiritual and temporal, had been seen since the Conquest. As the ceremony marked the inauguration of a new line of kings, it was determined to celebrate it with unusual splendour. The Jacobites prayed for rain, but the day broke fine and cloudless. The King drove down to Westminster in a State coach early in the morning, and retired to the Court of Wards until the peers and Court officials were put in order by the heralds. They then came in long procession to Westminster Hall, where George the First received them seated under a canopy of state. The sword and spurs were presented to the King, the crown and other regalia, the Bible, chalice and paten, and were then delivered to the lords and bishops appointed to carry them. The procession to the Abbey was formed in order of precedence. The Prince of Wales followed the Lord Great Chamberlain, wearing his robes of crimson velvet, furred with ermine; his coronet and cap were borne before him on a crimson velvet cushion. No place

The Ceremony of
the CHAMPION of ENGLAND giving
the Challenge at the Coronation.

was found in the procession for the Princess of Wales, but a chair was placed for her in the Abbey, under a canopy near the sacrarium. The King walked immediately after the officials bearing the regalia, in his royal robes of crimson velvet, lined with ermine, and bordered with gold lace, wearing the collar of St. George, and on his head the cap of estate of crimson velvet turned up with ermine and adorned with a circle of gold enriched with diamonds. He was supported on either side by the Bishops of Durham and Bath and Wells, and walked under a canopy borne by the Barons of the Cinque Ports. He was not a majestic figure despite the bravery of his attire.

When the King arrived at the Abbey, the Archbishop of Canterbury began the Coronation service with the Recognition. The King stood up in his chair, and showed himself to the people on every four sides, and the Archbishop went round the chair, calling out at each corner: "Sirs, I here present to you King George, the undoubted King of these realms. Wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same?" The people shouted, "God save King George," and the trumpets sounded. Then his Majesty made his first oblation, and the lords who bore the regalia presented them at the altar, the Litany was sung, and the Communion service proceeded with as far as the Nicene Creed, when the Bishop of Oxford preached what can only be described as a fulsome sermon from the text: "This

is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it". After the sermon the ceremonial proceeded. The King repeated and signed the declaration against Roman Catholicism, also made at their coronation by William and Mary, and by Anne, which was the reason of his presence there that day. He took the coronation oath, in which he swore to the utmost of his power "to maintain the Laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by Law". This done, he seated himself in King Edward's chair, which was placed facing the altar. He was anointed, presented with the spurs, girt with the sword, vested with his purple robes, and having received the ring, the orb and the sceptres, was crowned about two o'clock, amid loud and repeated acclamations, the drums beating, the trumpets sounding, and the cannon blaring. The Prince of Wales and the other peers then put on their coronets. The Bible was presented to the King by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and his Majesty sat on his throne and received the homage of the Prince of Wales and the lords, spiritual and temporal. The second oblation was made, the King received the Holy Communion, and at the close of the office retired to King Edward's chapel. He was there revested in his robes of velvet, but now wore his crown, the procession was re-formed, and he returned to Westminster Hall. The coronation banquet followed, the King having on his left the Prince of Wales. It was all over

by seven o'clock, when the King returned to St. James's.[1]

Several amusing incidents occurred at the coronation of George the First. It was attended by men of all parties, Tories, Whigs and even Jacobites were present, and their emotions varied according to their views. George was crowned "King of France," and in proof of this nominal right, two hirelings, a couple of players in fact, attended to represent the Dukes of Picardy and Normandy. They wore robes of crimson velvet and ermine, and each held in his hand a cap of cloth of gold. They did homage to the King with the other peers, and when the nobles put their coronets on their heads, the sham dukes clapped their caps on too. This part of the performance afforded much amusement to the Jacobites, who remarked derisively that the sham peers were worthy of the sham king. On the other hand, Lady Cowper, who was a thorough-going Whig, writes: "I never was so affected with joy in all my life; it brought tears into my eyes, and I hope I shall never forget the blessing of seeing our holy religion preserved, as well as our liberties and properties". But her pious joy did not prevent her commenting on the ill-behaviour of her rival, Lady Nottingham, who, not content with pushing Lady Cowper aside, taking her place and forcing her to mount the pulpit stairs in order to see, "when the

[1] A long and detailed account of the coronation of George I. is given in *The Political State of Great Britain*, vol. viii., pp. 347 *et seq.*, from which these particulars are taken.

Litany was to be sung, broke from behind the rest of the company, where she was placed, and knelt down before them all, though none of the rest did, facing the King and repeating the Litany. Everybody stared at her, and I could read in their countenances that they thought she overdid her High Church part."[1]

Bolingbroke was present, and did homage to the King, who, not having seen him before, asked the Lord Chamberlain who he was, whereupon Bolingbroke turned round, faced the throne, and made three very low obeisances. He was more complaisant than many of the Jacobite peers and peeresses, who, though they were present, could hardly conceal their feelings. For instance, when the Archbishop went round the throne demanding the consent of the people, Lady Dorchester, who was an ardent Jacobite (for she had been mistress of James the Second, and raised to the peerage as the price of her dishonour), asked the lady next her: "Does the old fool think anybody here will say 'no' to his question, when there are so many drawn swords?" Owing to the King's ignorance of English, and to the high officials standing near him knowing neither German nor French, the ceremonies incident upon his coronation had to be explained to him through the medium of such Latin as they could muster. This circumstance gave rise to the jest that much bad language passed between the King and his Ministers on the day of his coronation. The King's repetition of the anti-

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

Catholic declaration was so impaired by his German accent as to be unintelligible, and he might have been protesting against something quite different for all that loyal Protestants could know. But if George did not understand the English language, he understood who were his enemies, and when Bishop Atterbury came forward, as in duty bound, to stand by the canopy, the King roughly repulsed him. The King had hitherto shown stolid indifference to everything prepared in his honour, determined not to be surprised into any expression of admiration, but when the peers shouted and put on their coronets, even his German phlegm was moved, and he declared that it reminded him of the Day of Judgment.

It is probable that the new-born interest in the House of Hanover reached its height at George the First's coronation, but even on that day all was not quite harmony. There were Jacobite riots in Bristol, Birmingham and Norwich. In London, though all passed off quietly, the loyalty of the mob showed signs of change; affronts were offered to the King, and shouts were heard of "Damn King George". If we may believe Baron Pöllnitz, there was one present at Westminster Hall who openly refused to acknowledge George the First as king on the very day of his coronation. When the champion, armed from head to foot in mail, rode into the banqueting hall, and, in a loud voice, challenged any person who did not acknowledge George as King of England, a woman threw down her glove, and cried that his Majesty King James the Third was the only lawful

owner of the crown, and the Elector of Hanover was a usurper. But this story is unsupported by any other authority. Everything goes to show that for the first few months, until the English people came to know more of their Hanoverian King, there was little open opposition. The Jacobites were for the moment dumfoundered by the ease and smoothness of the change, while the Tories, divided amongst themselves, were in hopeless confusion. Even Louis the Fourteenth, that bulwark of Jacobite hopes, acknowledged George as King of England. The great mass of the nation acquiesced in the new *régime*, but without enthusiasm, and were willing to give it a fair trial. But the Whigs made amends for the lack of general enthusiasm, and were jubilant at the turn of events, which had exceeded their most sanguine hopes.

A month or two later the Government appointed "A day of public thanksgiving for his Majesty's happy and peaceable accession to the crown," and the King, with the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the great officers of state, attended a special service in St. Paul's Cathedral, where a *Te Deum* was sung and a sermon preached by the Bishop of Gloucester. Everything passed off harmoniously, and the royal procession was loudly acclaimed on its way to and from St. Paul's. Truly the stars in their courses were fighting for the House of Hanover.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURT OF THE FIRST GEORGE.

1714-1715.

CAROLINE'S duties as Princess of Wales began almost from the first hour of her arrival in England. The Court of George the First lacked a Queen, and all that the presence of a Queen implies. The King's unhappy consort, Sophie Dorothea, whose grace, beauty and incomparable charm might have lent lustre to the Court of St. James's, and whose innate refinement would have toned down some of the grossness of the early Hanoverian era, was locked up in Ahlden. Caroline had to fill her place as best she could; she laboured under obvious disadvantages, for no Princess of Wales, however beautiful and gifted, and Caroline was both, could quite take the place of Queen, and in Caroline's case her difficulties were increased by the jealousy of the King, who viewed with suspicion every act of the Prince and Princess of Wales to win popularity as directed against himself. Caroline at first managed by tact and diplomacy to avoid the royal displeasure, and she would probably have continued to do so had it not been for the inept blundering of

the Prince of Wales, who, in his efforts to gain the popular favour, was apt to overdo his part. But at first the Princess kept him in check, and gave the King no tangible excuse for manifesting his disapproval. "The Princess of Wales hath the genius," quoth Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who hated her, "to fit her for the government of a fool," forgetting that she was really paying a tribute to Caroline's powers, for fools are proverbially difficult to govern, especially so vain and choleric a fool as little George Augustus.

The Princess of Wales possessed that consummate art which enabled her to govern without in the least appearing to do so, and so effectually did she hoodwink even those admitted to the inner circle of the Court, that many were disposed at first to treat her as a mere cypher, knowing that she had no influence with the King, and thinking she had none with her husband. But others, more shrewd, paid her their court, recognising her abilities, and realising that in the future she might become the dominant factor in the situation. Even now she was the first lady of the land, and whatever brilliancy George the First's Court possessed during the first two or three years of his reign was due to her. From the beginning she was the only popular member of the royal family. Her early training at the Court of Berlin stood her in good stead at St. James's and she was well fitted by nature to maintain the position to which she had been called. She still retained her beauty. She was more than

common tall, of majestic presence; she had an exquisitely modelled neck and bust, and her hand was the delight of the sculptor. Her smile was distinguished by its sweetness and her voice rich and low. Her lofty brow, and clear, thoughtful gaze showed that she was a woman of no ordinary mould. She had the royal memory, and, what must have been a very useful attribute to her, the power of self-command; she was an adept in the art of concealing her feelings, of suiting herself to her company, and of occasionally appearing to be what she was not. Her love of art, letters and science, her lively spirits, quick apprehension of character and affability were all points in her favour. She had, too, a love of state, and appeared magnificently arrayed at Court ceremonials, evidently delighting in her exalted position and fully alive to its dignity.

The Prince and the Princess of Wales had a great advantage over the King in that they were able to speak English; not very well, it is true, but they could make their meaning plain, and understood everything that was said to them. In her immediate circle Caroline talked French, though she spoke English when occasion served. When she was excited she would pour forth a volley of polyglot sentences, in which French, English and German were commingled. The Prince and Princess of Wales loudly expressed their liking for England and things English: "I have not a drop of blood in my veins dat is not English," exclaimed the Prince, and Lady Cowper relates how she

went to dinner at Mrs. Clayton's, and found her hostess in raptures over all the pleasant things the Prince had been saying about the English: "That he thought them the best, handsomest, the best-shaped, best-natured and lovingest people in the world, and that if anybody would make their court to him, it must be by telling him that he was like an Englishman". And she adds, "This did not at all please the foreigners at our table. They could not contain themselves, but fell into the violentest, silliest, ill-mannered invective against the English that was ever heard."[1] Caroline, too, was full of England's praises, and on one occasion forcibly declared that she would "as soon live on a dunghill as return to Hanover". All these kind expressions were duly repeated, and greatly pleased the people, and the popularity of the Prince and Princess of Wales grew daily.

Places in the household of the Princess of Wales were greatly sought, and as there was no Queen-Consort, they assumed unusual importance. Among the earliest appointments to the Princess's household were those of the Duchesses of Bolton, St. Albans and Montagu to different positions; the Countesses of Berkeley, Dorset and Cowper as ladies of the bedchamber; and Mrs. Selwyn, Mrs. Pollexfen, Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Clayton as bedchamber women. Some of these names call for more than passing comment. The Duchess of Bolton was the natural daughter of the unfortunate Duke of

[1] Diary of Lady Cowper.

Monmouth, by Eleanor, daughter of Sir Richard Needham, and all of Monmouth's blood had good reason to hate James the Second and his descendants. The Duchess of St. Albans was an heiress in her own right, and the duchess of the Protestant Whig duke, who was a natural son of Charles the Second, by Eleanor Gwynne; he also had suffered many affronts from James the Second. The Duchess of Montagu was a daughter of the Duke of Marlborough. The Countesses of Berkeley and Dorset were both the ladies of great Whig lords. Lady Cowper was the wife of the new Lord Chancellor; she came of a good Durham family, the Claverings, and had married Lord Cowper with a suddenness and secrecy that had never been satisfactorily explained. Rumour said that as Molly Clavering her reputation had not been unblemished, and she was spoken of familiarly by the rakish part of the town. We find her denying this gossip with a vigour which tempts us to believe that there must have been something in it. But it is certain that after her marriage to Lord Cowper she was a virtuous matron of highly correct principles, and devotedly attached to her husband and children. Like her lord she had fixed her hopes upon the Hanoverian succession. She tells us how "for four years past I had kept a constant correspondence with the Princess, now my mistress. I had received many, and those the kindest letters from her," which shows not only the interest which Caroline, while yet Electoral Princess, took in English affairs, but also the astuteness of some of the Whig ladies, who were anxious

to take time by the forelock, and pay their court to the powers that might be. Very soon after the Princess's arrival, Lady Cowper was rewarded by being given this post in her household, and for some years she stood high in Caroline's favour. If we may believe her, she also enjoyed the favour of Bernstorff and of the King, for she tells us how she rejected Bernstorff's addresses, and of her virtuous discouragement of the King's overtures.

Among the Princess of Wales's women of the bedchamber two names stand out pre-eminent, those of Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Clayton. The first came over from Hanover with her husband in the train of the Princess of Wales as a *dame du palais*, and Caroline further showed her complaisance to her husband's favourite by consenting to her appointment in her household. Howard was consoled by being made a gentleman usher to the King. In England, as at Hanover, Mrs. Howard behaved with great discretion, and was exceedingly popular at Court and much liked by the other ladies of the household (except Mrs. Clayton), who, however much they might quarrel among themselves, never quarrelled with her. Mrs. Clayton, *née* Dyves, was a lady of obscure origin. She married Robert Clayton, a clerk of the Treasury and a manager of the Duke of Marlborough's estates. Clayton was a dull man and his wife ruled him completely. He would never have risen in the world had not his wife been a friend and correspondent of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. The duchess, through Bothmar's

influence, procured a post in the Princess's household for Mrs. Clayton. She became a favourite with the Princess, and gradually exercised influence over her, especially agreeing with her mistress in her views on religion. She was a woman of considerable ability, and of no ordinary share of cunning.

In addition to these ladies Caroline surrounded herself with a bevy of maids of honour, most of them still in their teens, all well born, witty and beautiful, who lent great brightness to her Court. Of these beautiful girls Mary Bellenden came first. She was the daughter of John, second Lord Bellenden, and was one of the most attractive women of her day. She was celebrated for her beauty, and especially for her wit and high spirits, which nothing could damp. She was the delight and ornament of the Court; the palm, Horace Walpole tells us, was given "above all for universal admiration to Miss Bellenden. Her face and person were charming, lively she was even to *étourderie*, and so agreeable that she was never afterwards mentioned by her contemporaries but as the most perfect creature they had ever seen."

With Mary Bellenden was her sister (or cousin), Margaret Bellenden, who was only a little less lovely, but of a more pensive type of beauty. Another maid of honour was Mary Lepel, the daughter of General Lepel, and if we may believe not only courtiers like Chesterfield and Bath, but independent critics like Gay, Pope and Voltaire, she was one of the most charming of women. She was of a more stately style

of beauty than Mary Bellenden, her spirits were not so irrepressible, but she had vivacity and great good sense, which, together with her rare power of pleasing, won for her the admiration of all. Chesterfield writes of her: "She has been bred all her life at Courts, of which she has acquired all the easy good breeding and politeness without the frivolousness. She has all the reading that a woman should have, and more than any woman need have; for she understands Latin perfectly well, though she wisely conceals it. No woman ever had more than she has *le ton de la parfaitement bonne compagnie, les manières engageantes et le je ne sçais quoi qui plaît*".

Pretty Bridget Carteret, *petite* and fair, a niece of Lord Carteret, was another maid of honour. Prim, pale Margaret Meadows was the oldest of them all, and did her best to keep her younger colleagues in order. She had a difficult task with one of them, giddy Sophia Howe. This young lady was the daughter of John Howe, by Ruperta, a natural daughter of Prince Rupert, brother of the old Electress Sophia; perhaps it was this relationship which led the Princess of Wales to appoint Sophia as one of her maids of honour. She was exceedingly gay and flighty, very fond of admiration, and so sprightly that she was laughing all the time, even in church. Once the Duchess of St. Albans chid her severely for giggling in the Chapel Royal, and told her "she could not do a worse thing," to which she saucily answered: "I beg

your Grace's pardon, I can do a great many worse things".

In these early days the Hanoverian family were especially anxious to show their conformity to the Church of England, and the King and the Prince and Princess of Wales made a point of regularly attending the Sunday morning service at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, attended by a numerous following. The Princess of Wales brought in her train a whole bevy of beauties, who were not so attentive to their devotions as they ought to have been, for the Chapel Royal soon became the fashionable resort of all the beaux of the town, and a great deal of ogling and smiling and tittering went on, especially during the sermon. At last Bishop Burnet complained to the Princess of the ill-behaviour of her maids of honour. He dared not complain to the King, as his Majesty was the most irreverent of all, habitually going to sleep through the sermon, or carrying on a brisk conversation in an audible voice. In justification he could have pleaded that Burnet's prosy homilies were exceptionally long, and he did not understand a word of them. The Princess expressed her contrition to the Bishop and rebuked her ladies, but as the gallants still continued to come and to gaze, she at last consented to Burnet's suggestion that the pew of the maids of honour should be boarded up so high that they could not see over the top. This excited great indignation on the part of the imprisoned fair and their admirers, and in revenge one of the noblemen about the Court, it

was said Lord Peterborough, wrote the following lines:—

Bishop Burnet perceived that the beautiful dames
Who flocked to the Chapel of hilly St. James
On their lovers alone their kind looks did bestow,
And smiled not on him while he bellowed below.
To the Princess he went, with pious intent,
This dangerous ill to the Church to prevent.
"Oh, madam," he said, "our religion is lost
If the ladies thus ogle the knights of the toast.
These practices, madam, my preaching disgrace:
Shall laymen enjoy the first rights of my place?
Then all may lament my condition so hard,
Who thrash in the pulpit without a reward.
Then pray condescend such disorders to end,
And to the ripe vineyard the labourers send
To build up the seats that the beauties may see
The face of no bawling pretender but me."
The Princess by rude importunity press'd,
Though she laugh'd at his reasons, allow'd his request;
And now Britain's nymphs in a Protestant reign
Are box'd up at prayers like the virgins of Spain.

Rhyming was the vogue in those days, and all fair ladies had poems composed in their honour. Of course King George and the Prince and Princess of Wales were not forgotten by the bards. The poet Young hailed the King on his arrival as follows:—

Welcome, great stranger, to Britannia's Throne,
And let thy country think thee all her own.
Of thy delay how oft did we complain;
Our hope reached out and met thee on the main.

With much more in the same strain. The Prince of Wales was celebrated by Congreve in his song on the Battle of Oudenarde:—

Not so did behave young Hanover brave
On this bloody field, I assure ye;
When his war-horse was shot he valued it not,
But fought still on foot like a fury.

It was unfortunate that the Prince, on having this effusion quoted to him, asked, "And who might Mr. Congreve be?" This ignorance gives us the measure of the House of Hanover respecting everything English, for Congreve was the most celebrated dramatist of his day. Addison summoned his muse to extol the Princess of Wales. He assured her that

> She was born to strengthen and grace our isle,

and speaks of her:—

> With graceful ease
> And native majesty is formed to please.

The Royal Family were very much in evidence at first. They were anxious, no doubt, to impress their personalities upon the English people, and they lost no opportunity of showing themselves in public. In pursuance of this policy, soon after the coronation, the King and the Prince and Princess of Wales, together with the young Princesses Anne and Amelia, went to see the Lord Mayor's Show, attended by the great officers of state, many of the nobility and judges, and a retinue of Hanoverians, including, no doubt, though they were not specified in the official lists, Schulemburg and Kielmansegge. The royal family took up their position in a balcony over against Bow Church, with a canopy of crimson velvet above them; the Prince of Wales sat on the King's right hand, the Princess on his left, and the two young Princesses were placed in front. The royal party and their Hanoverian suite were highly

delighted with the show, which far exceeded anything of the kind they had seen before, and when it was over, the King offered to knight the owner of the house from whose balcony he had looked down upon the procession. But the worthy citizen was a Quaker, and refused the honour, much to the astonishment of his Majesty. After the procession the Sheriffs and Aldermen came to escort the royal family to the Guildhall, where a magnificent feast was prepared. The Lord Mayor, Sir William Humphreys, knelt at the entrance of the Guildhall and presented the City sword to the King, who touched it, and gave it back to his good keeping. The Lady Mayoress, arrayed in black velvet, with a train many yards long, came forward to make obeisance to the Princess of Wales. It was a moot point, and one which had occasioned much discussion between the Princess and her ladies-in-waiting, whether she should kiss the Lady Mayoress or not; but some one remembered that Queen Anne had not done so, and so the Princess determined to be guided by this recent precedent. The Lady Mayoress, however, fully expected to be saluted by the Princess, and advanced towards her with this intent, but finding the kiss withheld, she, to quote Lady Cowper, "did make the most violent bawling to her page to hold up her train before the Princess, being loath to lose the privilege of her Mayoralty. But the greatest jest was that the King and the Princess both had been told that my Lord Mayor had borrowed her for the day only, so I had

much ado to convince them of the contrary, though she by marriage was a sort of relation of my Lord's first wife. At last they did agree that if he had borrowed a wife, it would have been another sort of one than she was."

The King soothed the Lady Mayoress's wounded feelings by declaring that she should sit at the same table with him, and harmony being restored, the royal party proceeded to the banqueting hall, which was hung with tapestry and decked with green boughs. The Lord Mayor, on bended knee, presented to the King the first glass of wine, which, it was noted with satisfaction, his Majesty drank at one gulp, and then again asked if there was any one for him to knight. Apparently knighthoods were not in the programme, but the King showed his appreciation of the civic hospitality by making the Lord Mayor a baronet, an honour that dignitary had striven hard to obtain, for he had been zealous in suppressing Jacobite libels, and sending hawkers of ribald verses and seditious ballad singers to prison. The King was also very gracious to Sir Peter King, the Recorder, and told him to acquaint the citizens of London with "these my principles. I never forsake a friend, and I will endeavour to do justice to everybody." When the banquet was ended there was a concert, and late in the evening the royal party departed, expressing themselves much pleased with their reception.

The Prince and Princess of Wales showed themselves continually in the West End, and in places

where the quality of the town most did congregate. At first they walked in St. James's Park every day, attended by a numerous suite, and followed by a fashionable, and would-be-fashionable, crowd. But after a time the Princess, who was as fond of outdoor exercise and fresh air as the old Electress Sophia, declared that St. James's Park "stank of people," and she migrated to Kensington, driving thither by coach, and then walking in the gardens. Kensington was at that time in the country, and separated from the town by Hyde Park and open fields. The palace, a favourite residence of William and Mary and Queen Anne, was the plainest and least pretending of the royal palaces, though Wren was supposed to have built the south front. But the air was reckoned very salubrious, and the grounds were the finest near London. The gardens were intersected by long straight gravel walks, and hedges of box and yew, many of them clipped and twisted into quaint shapes. Pope made fun of them, and gave an imaginary catalogue of the horticultural fashions of the day, such as: "Adam and Eve in yew, Adam a little shattered by the fall of the Tree of Knowledge in a great storm, Eve and the Serpent very flourishing". "St. George in box, his arm scarce long enough, but will be in condition to stick the dragon by next April." "An old Maid of Honour in wormwood." "A topping Ben Jonson in laurel," and so forth.

As soon as the Princess of Wales took to walking at Kensington, the gardens became a fashionable

promenade. The general public was not admitted except by ticket, but persons of fashion came in great throng. The poets now began to sing of Kensington and its beauties. Tickell gives a picture of these promenades in the following lines:—

Where Kensington, high o'er the neighb'ring lands,
'Midst greens and sweets, a regal fabrick stands,
And sees each spring, luxuriant in her bowers,
A snow of blossoms and a wild of flowers,
The dames of Britain oft in crowds repair
To groves and lands and unpolluted air.
Here, while the town in damps and darkness lies,
They breathe in sunshine and see azure skies;
Each walk, with robes of various dies bespread
Seems from afar a moving tulip-bed,
Where rich brocades and glossy damasks glow,
And chintz, the rival of the showery bow.
Here England's Daughter,[1] darling of the land,
Sometimes, surrounded with her virgin band,
Gleams through the shades. She towering o'er the rest,
Stands fairest of the fairer kind confess'd;
Form'd to gain hearts that Brunswick cause denied
And charm a people to her father's side.

The Kensington promenades were only a small part of the busy Court life of the day. Almost every evening drawing-rooms were held at St. James's Palace, at which were music and cards. The latter became the rage in season and out of season, and high play was the pastime of every one at Court. On one occasion at the Princess's court the Prince was "ill of a surfeit" and obliged to keep his bed, so that the ordinary levée could not be held. But he was not to be cheated of his game, and the ladies in waiting were summoned, tables were placed,

[1] The Princess of Wales.

and they were all set to play at ombre with the lords of the Prince's bedchamber. And on another occasion Lady Cowper writes of the King's drawing-room at St. James's: "There was such a Court I never saw in my life. My mistress and the Duchess of Montagu went halves at hazard and won six hundred pounds. Mr. Archer came in great form to offer me a place at the table, but I laughed and said he did not know me if he thought I was capable of venturing two hundred guineas at play, for none sat down to the table with less." Deep drinking went with the high play. One George Mayo was one night turned out of the royal presence "for being drunk and saucy. He fell out with Sir James Baker, and in the fray pulled him by the nose."

The Court was no longer exclusive as in the days of Queen Anne, almost every one of any station came who would, and in the crowded rooms there was a good deal of pushing and hustling to get within sight of the Royal Family. The Venetian ambassadress, Madame Tron, a very lively lady, was so hustled one night that she kept crying, "Do not touch my face," and she cried so loud that the King heard her, and turning to a courtier behind him said: "Don't you hear the ambassadress? She offers you all the rest of her body provided you don't touch her face." A pleasantry truly Georgian. These crowded drawing-rooms were a great change to what St. James's was in Queen Anne's time, where, according to Dean Swift, who gives us an

account of one of her receptions, "the Queen looked at us with a fan in her mouth, and once a minute said about three words to some one who was near her. Then she was told dinner was ready and went out." Now every event in the Royal Family was made the pretext for further gaiety. "This day, 30th October" [1714], writes Lady Cowper, "was the Prince's birthday; I never saw the Court so splendidly fine. The evening concluded with a ball, which the Prince and Princess began. She danced in slippers very well; the Prince better than anybody."

The King and the Prince and Princess of Wales were very fond of the theatres. In the gazettes of the time frequent mention is made of their being present at the opera to hear Nicolina sing or witnessing a play at Drury Lane. We find the Royal Family, together with a great concourse of the nobility, at a masquerade and ball at the Haymarket,[1] which was attended by all the town, and the company was numerous rather than select. It was the pleasure of the royal personages to don mask and domino and go down from their box and mingle freely with the company. It was on this occasion, probably, that a fair Jacobite accosted the King. "Here, sirrah, a bumper to King James." "I drink with all my heart to the health of any unfortunate prince," said his Majesty, and emptied his glass, without disclosing his identity. Caroline said she liked to go to the play to improve her English, and her taste was very catholic, ranging

[1] *The Flying Post*, 21st February, 1716.

from Shakespeare to the broadest farce. She rather scandalised the more sober part of her Court by witnessing a comedy called "The Wanton Wife," which was considered both improper and immoral; it had been recommended to her by the chaste and prudish Lady Cowper, of all matrons in the world. The Duchess of Bolton often recommended plays to the King. She was very lively and free in her conversation, making many droll slips of the tongue when she talked French, either designedly or by accident. At one of the King's parties she was telling him how much she had enjoyed the play at Drury Lane the night before; it was Colley Cibber's "Love's Last Shift". The King did not understand the title, so he said, "Put it into French". "*La dernière chemise de l'amour*," she answered, quite gravely, whereat the King burst out laughing.

The Royal Family were also assiduous in honouring with their presence the entertainments of the great nobility, provided they were Whig in politics. We hear of their being at a ball at the Duchess of Somerset's, a dinner at the Duchess of Shrewsbury's, a supper at my Lady Bristol's, and so on. At Lady Bristol's the King was never in better humour, and said "a world of sprightly things". Among the rest, the Duchess of Shrewsbury said to him: "Sir, we have a grievance against your Majesty because you will not have your portrait painted, and lo! here is your medal which will hand your effigy down to posterity with a nose as long as your arm". "So much the better," said the King, "*c'est une tête de*

l'antique". But the virtuous Lady Cowper adds: "Though I was greatly diverted, and there was a good deal of music, yet I could not avoid being uneasy at the repetition of some words in French which the Duchess of Bolton said by mistake, which convinced me that the two foreign ladies" (presumably Schulemburg and Kielmansegge) "were no better than they should be". A good many ladies "who were no better than they should be" attended the drawing-rooms of George the First, and their conversation was very free. Old Lady Dorchester, the mistress of James the Second, came one night, and meeting the Duchess of Portsmouth, mistress of Charles the Second, and Lady Orkney, mistress of William the Third, exclaimed, "Who would have thought that we three whores should have met here!" It was certainly an interesting meeting.

The Princess of Wales was in great request as godmother at the christenings of children of the high nobility. Apparently this form of royal condescension was somewhat expensive, for there was a lively dispute among the Princess's ladies as to the sum she ought to give the nurses at christenings. When she stood godmother to the Duchess of Ancaster's child she and the Prince sent thirty guineas, which was thought too little, though, on inquiry into precedent, it was found that King Charles the Second never gave more on such occasions than five guineas to an esquire's nurse, ten to a baron's, twenty to an earl's, and then raised five guineas for every degree in the peerage. Sometimes the Royal Family acted as sponsors to the

children of humbler personages. On one occasion the King stood as godfather and the Princess of Wales as godmother to the infant daughter of Madame Darastauli, chief singer at the opera. Though they frequently attended christenings, there is not a single record in the *Gazette* of any of the Royal Family having honoured a wedding, or having been present at a funeral, even of the most distinguished personages in the realm. Christenings and funerals were then the great occasions in family life. If my lord died it was usual for his bereaved lady to receive her friends sitting upright in the matrimonial bed under a canopy. The widow, the bed and the bedchamber (which was lighted by a single taper) were draped with crape, and the children of the deceased, clad in the same sable garments, were ranged at the foot of the bed. The ceremony passed in solemn silence, and after sitting for a while the guests retired without having uttered a word.

The London to which Caroline came was a very different London to the vast metropolis we know to-day. Its total population could not have exceeded seven hundred thousand, and between the City of London proper and Westminster were wide spaces, planted here and there with trees, but for the most part waste lands. The City was then, as now, the heart of London, and the centre of business lay between St. Paul's and the Exchange, while Westminster had a life apart, arising out of the Houses of Parliament. The political and fashion-

able life of London collected around St. James's and the Mall. St. James's Park was the fashionable promenade; it was lined with avenues of trees, and ornamented with a long canal and a duck-pond. St. James's Palace was much as it is now, and old Marlborough House occupied the site of the present one, but on the site of Buckingham Palace stood Buckingham House, the seat of the powerful Duke of Buckingham, a stately mansion which the duke had built in a "little wilderness full of blackbirds and nightingales". In St. James's Street were the most frequented and fashionable coffee and chocolate houses, and also a few select "mug houses". Quaint signs, elaborately painted, carved and gilded, overhung the streets, and largely took the place of numbers; houses were known as "The Blue Boar," "The Pig and Whistle," "The Merry Maidens," "The Red Bodice," and so forth.

It was easy in those days to walk out from London into the open country on all sides. Marylebone was a village, Stepney a distant hamlet, and London south of the river had hardly begun. Piccadilly was almost a rural road, lined with shady trees, and here and there broken by large houses with gardens. It terminated in Hyde Park, then a wild heath, with fields to the north and Kensington to the west. Bloomsbury, Soho and Seven Dials were fashionable districts (many old mansions in Bloomsbury are relics of the Queen Anne and early Georgian era), though the tide of fashion was already beginning to move westward. Grosvenor Square

was not begun until 1716, and Mayfair was chiefly known from the six weeks' fair which gave it its name. One feature of the London of the early Georges might well be revived in these days of crowded streets and increasing traffic. The Thames was then a fashionable waterway, and a convenient means of getting from one part of London to another. Boats and wherries on the Thames were as numerous and as fashionable as gondolas at Venice, and the King, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and many of the nobility, had their barges in the same way that they had their coaches and sedan-chairs, and often "took the air on the water".

London, though quainter and more interesting then than now, had its drawbacks. Fogs had scarcely made their appearance, but the ill-paved streets, except for a few lamps which flickered here and there, were in darkness, and link boys were largely employed. After dark the streets were dangerous for law-abiding citizens. The "Mohocks," who were the aristocratic prototypes of the "Hooligans" of our day, had been to some extent put down, but many wild young bloods still made it their business at night to prowl about the streets molesting peaceable citizens, insulting women and defying the Watch, who, drunken and corrupt, often played into their hands. Conveyances were difficult to procure; the old and dirty hackney coaches were few, and dear to hire. There were sedan-chairs, but they had not yet come into general use, and were the privilege of the few rather than of the many. The town must have been

very noisy in those days, a babel of cries went up from itinerant musicians, ballad-singers, orange girls, flower girls, beggars, itinerant vendors, rat-catchers, chair-menders, knife-grinders and so forth. Idle and disreputable persons stood in the gutters, and shook dice boxes at the passers-by and pestered them to gamble. Drunkenness was common, and accounted for the many fights and brawls that took place in the streets.

In the fashionable world dinner was taken in the middle of the day, or from two to four o'clock, and supper was the pleasanter and more informal meal. Card parties and supper parties generally went together. There were lighter hospitalities also; and among the less wealthy many pleasant little gatherings were held in the evening around coffee and oranges. Ladies of quality passed most of their afternoons going from house to house drinking tea, which at the high prices then asked was a luxury. Men of fashion idled away many hours in the coffee and chocolate houses, of which some of the most famous were White's Chocolate House (now the well-known club), the Cocoa Tree, also in St. James's Street, Squire's near Gray's Inn Gate, Garraway's in 'Change Alley and Lloyd's in Lombard Street. Clubs were in their infancy when George the First was king. A few had come into being, but they were chiefly literary or political societies, such as the brief-lived Kit-Cat Club, which was devoted to the House of Hanover, and flourished in Queen Anne's reign, or the October Club, chiefly formed of Jacobite squires.

There was also the Hellfire Club, a wild association of young men, under the Duke of Wharton, which did its best to justify the name.

London lived more out of doors at the beginning of the eighteenth century than it does now; we read of fêtes in the gardens and parks, the ever popular fairs, pleasure parties on the Thames in the summer, and bonfires in the squares and on the ice in winter, and many street shows.

Any picture of social life of the period would lack colour which did not give some idea of the quaint dress of the day. Men thought as much about dress as women, and though it is impossible to follow all the vagaries of fashion as shown in the waxing and waning of wigs, the variations of cocked hats, coats, gold lace and sword hilts, yet we may note that men of fashion began to wear the full-bottomed peruke in the reign of George the First, and their ordinary attire consisted of ample-skirted coats, long and richly embroidered waistcoats, breeches, stockings, and shoes with buckles, and three-cornered hats. The beaux or "pretty fellows" of the day blazed out into silks and velvets, reds and greens, and a profusion of gold lace; they were distinguished not only by the many-coloured splendour of their attire, but by their scents of orange flower and civet, their jewelled snuff-boxes, their gold or tortoise-shell rimmed perspective glasses, and especially for their canes, which were often of amber, mounted with gold, the art of carrying which bespoke the latest mode.

The ladies, naturally, were no whit behind the men

in the variety and novelty of their attire. They bedecked themselves with the brightest hues, and their hair, piled up or flowing, with head-dresses high or low, as fashion decreed, arranged in ringlets or worn plain or powdered, went through as many fluctuations as their lords' big-wigs, periwigs and perukes. The fan played a large part in conversation and flirtation, and patches and powder were arranged with due regard to effect. Muffs were a prodigious size. It is impossible for the mere man to give a particular description of the silks, velvets, jewels, laces, ribbons and feathers which formed part of the equipment of a lady of quality, or to follow the mysteries of commodes, sacks, *négligés*, bedgowns and mob-caps. But the walking dresses, if we may judge from the fashion plates, seem to have left an extraordinary amount of bosom exposed, to have been very tight in the waist, and to have carried an enormous number of flounces. The hoop, which gradually developed through the Georgian era, was the most monstrous enormity that ever appeared in the world of fashion. The lady who wore a hoop really stood in a cage, and when she moved, she did not seem to walk, for her steps were not visible, but she was rather wafted along. So stepped fair ladies from their sedan-chairs, or floated down the avenues of Kensington and Hampton Court. Servants wore clothes almost as fine as their masters and mistresses, and aped their manners and their vices. All great mansions supported throngs of idle servants in gorgeous liveries, and my lady often had her negro boy, who waited

on her, clad in scarlet and gold, with a silver collar around his neck.

Society in the early Georgian era, though marred by excess in eating and drinking and by coarseness in conversation, which the example of the King had made fashionable, was characterised by a spirit of robust enjoyment. Judging from the letters, journals, plays, poems and caricatures of the period, social life was exceedingly lively and varied, though too often disfigured by bitter party animosities, scurrilous personal attacks and brutal practical jokes. The tone was not high. The beaux and exquisites were given to drunkenness, vice and gambling; the belles and ladies of quality to scandal, spite and extravagance, to a degree unusual even among the rich and idle, and the marriage vow seemed generally to be held in light estimation. But we should not be too hasty in assuming that the early Georgian era was necessarily much worse than the present day. If there was more grossness there were fewer shams. Its sins were very much on the surface; it indulged in greater freedom of manners and licence of speech, and many leaders of society, from the King downwards, led lives which were notoriously immoral; but there were plenty of honest men and virtuous women in those days as now, probably more in proportion, only we do not hear so much about them as the others. In many respects life was purer, simpler and more honest than it is to-day, beliefs were more vital, and the struggle for existence far less keen.

Such was the London to which Caroline came, and such was the society which she, as the first lady in the land, might influence for good or evil. Let it be recorded that in her own life and conduct she did what she could to set a good example. She was a good wife and a good mother, no word of scandal was ever whispered against her, and in her own circle she strove to encourage the higher and intellectual life, and to purify and refine some of the grosser elements around her. More than that she could not do, for it must be remembered that the duty of moral responsibility was not greatly accounted of in the days of the early Georges.

CHAPTER III.

THE REACTION.

1715.

As the tide of popular feeling seemed flowing in favour of the new King, the Government took advantage of it to dissolve Parliament, which had now sat for nearly six months since the death of Queen Anne. This Parliament behaved with dignity and circumspection at a crisis of English history. The majority of the members of the House of Commons were Tory, but, despite a certain element of Jacobitism, they had shown their loyal acquiescence in the Hanoverian succession in a variety of ways. They had voted to George the First a civil list of £700,000 per annum, of which £100,000 was for the Prince of Wales; they had even agreed, though with wry faces, to pay £65,000 which the King claimed as arrears due to his Hanoverian troops. The Tories had certainly earned more consideration from the King than they received. But the fiat had gone forth that there was to be no commerce with them, and Ministers were determined to obtain a Whig majority. To this end they not only employed all the resources of bribery and corruption

by lavish expenditure of secret service money, but were so unconstitutional as to drag the King into the arena of party politics. In the Royal Proclamation summoning the new Parliament, the King was made to call upon the electors to baffle the designs of disaffected persons, and "to have a particular regard to such as showed a fondness to the Protestant succession when it was in danger". This was perhaps to some extent justified by a manifesto which James had issued the previous August from Lorraine, in which he spoke of George as "a foreigner ignorant of the language, laws and customs of England," and said he had been waiting to claim his rights on the death "of the Princess our sister, of whose good intentions towards us we could not for some time past well doubt". This manifesto compromised the late Queen's Ministers, and the Government determined to challenge the verdict of the country upon it.

The Jacobites were quite willing to meet the issue. Riots broke out at Birmingham, Bristol, Chippenham, Norwich and other considerable towns in the kingdom. In the words of the old Cavalier song, it was declared that times would not mend "until the King enjoyed his own again," and James's health was drunk at public and private dinners by passing the wine glass over the water bottle, thus transforming the toast of "The King," into "The King over the water". The hawkers of pamphlets and ballads openly vended and shouted Jacobite songs in the streets, and many of them were prosecuted with great severity. Two forces, opposite

enough in other ways, the Church and the Stage, were found to be united against the Government, and a Royal Proclamation was issued commanding the clergy not to touch upon politics in their sermons, and forbidding farces and plays which held Protestant dissenters up to ridicule.

The violence of the Jacobites played into the hands of the Government and considerably embarrassed the moderate section of the Tory party, who, under the leadership of Sir Thomas Hanmer, were opposed to the restoration of a Roman Catholic prince, and were willing to support the monarchy as represented by the House of Hanover, provided that they had some voice in the government of the country. But the Whigs pressed home their advantage, and raised the cry of "No Popery," with which they knew the nation as a whole thoroughly agreed. The Tories could only fall back on their old cry, "The Church in danger," declaring that George the First was not a *bonâ-fide* member of the Church of England, but a Protestant Lutheran, and pointing to the fact that he had brought with him his Lutheran chaplain. But this was clearly inconsistent, for though the King was not a sound Churchman, he was not a man to make difficulties about religious matters, and he had unhesitatingly conformed to the Church of England, and had attended services in the Chapel Royal and received the sacrament, together with the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Church would be obviously in far greater danger from a Roman Catholic prince who

refused to acknowledge the validity of Anglican sacraments or orders, and who regarded the Church of England as heretical.

The result of the General Election was a foregone conclusion, for though only a year or two before the people in many parts of England had shown themselves well disposed towards a Stuart restoration, they were easily led by those in authority. The mob is always ready to shout with the stronger, and in this instance the Whigs and the Hanoverians had clearly shown themselves the stronger. There had been an improvement in trade and a good harvest, and this told in favour of the new *régime*. In short the great mass of the people were utterly weary of political strife and revolutions; all they wanted was to be left to live their lives, and do their work in peace, and, provided they were not overtaxed, or their liberties and religion menaced, they were quite indifferent whether a Stuart or a Guelph reigned over them. Outside London and the great cities politics did not affect the people one way or another, but prejudice goes for something, and there is no doubt that the people of England, by an overwhelming majority, were prejudiced against the Roman Catholic religion, and a Roman Catholic claimant to the throne, after their experience of James the Second was naturally regarded with suspicion. The English people knew little as yet about George from Hanover, and cared less; the only thing they knew was that he was not a Roman Catholic, and that was in his favour. They sighed too for a settled form of

government, and this the Hanoverian succession seemed to promise them.

When the new Parliament met in March, the Whigs had an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. The King opened Parliament in person, but as he was unable to speak English, his speech was read by Lord Chancellor Cowper. In it George the First was made to declare that he was "called to the throne of his ancestors," and he would uphold the established constitution of Church and State. It was soon evident that the Whigs meant to follow up their victory at the polls by persecuting their opponents. In the House of Lords the Address contained the words "to recover the reputation of this kingdom," and Bolingbroke made his last speech in Parliament in moving an amendment to substitute the word "maintain" for the word "recover," which, he eloquently objected, would cast a slur upon the reign of the late Queen. Of course the amendment was lost. The temper of the new Parliament was soon made manifest, and threats of impeachment were the order of the day. At one time it seemed likely that Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, would be impeached, for Walpole declared in the House of Commons that, "Evident proofs will appear of a meeting having been held by some considerable persons, one of whom is not far off, wherein it was proposed to proclaim the Pretender at the Royal Exchange". This, of course, was an allusion to the hurried meeting which had been held in Lady Masham's apartments when the Queen lay dying,

and Atterbury's offer to go forth and proclaim James. But all the Ministers were not so zealous as Walpole, and more moderate counsels prevailed; they were afraid of arousing the old cry of "The Church in danger," and Atterbury was left alone. But Bolingbroke in the House of Lords sat and heard that he and some of his late colleagues were to be impeached of high treason.

Bolingbroke affected to treat the threat with contempt, and for some days he went about in public as usual, saying that he was glad to be quit of the cares of office, and to be able to devote his leisure to literature. On the evening of March 26th (1715), he ostentatiously showed himself in a box at Drury Lane, discussed plans for the morrow, and laughed and talked with his friends. When the performance was over, he went back to his house, disguised himself as a serving man in a large coat and a black wig, and stole off under cover of the darkness to Dover, whence he crossed in a small vessel to France. It was said that Bolingbroke's flight, a grave mistake, was largely determined by Marlborough, who, being anxious to get him out of the way, pretended he had certain knowledge that it was agreed between the English Ministers and the Dutch Government that he was to be beheaded.

A Committee of Secrecy was now formed to examine into the conduct of the last Ministry of Queen Anne with regard to the Treaty of Utrecht and James's restoration. This committee consisted of twenty-one members, all Whigs, and when at

safe distance he saw the list, Bolingbroke must have known that he had little chance of a fair trial, for the chairman of the committee was his bitter enemy, Robert Walpole. The Tories in Parliament still believed, or pretended to believe, that matters would not be carried to extremities, and talked much of the clemency of the King, but they were mistaken. When the committee reported it was found that Oxford, Ormonde and Bolingbroke were to be impeached of high treason, and Strafford, who was one of the plenipotentiaries at Utrecht, was accused of high crimes and misdemeanours. Ormonde was living at Richmond in great state, and, since his dismissal, had ostentatiously ignored the House of Hanover. He was very popular with the people, and had powerful friends in both Houses of Parliament, many of whom urged him to seek an audience of the King at once, and throw himself on the royal clemency. Others wished him to go to the west of England, and stir up an insurrection in favour of James. Ormonde did neither. Like Bolingbroke, he was seized with panic, and determined to fly to France. Before he went he visited Oxford and besought him to escape also. Oxford refused, and Ormonde took leave of him with the words: "Farewell, Oxford, without a head," to which the latter replied: "Farewell, duke, without a duchy".

Of the threatened lords Oxford was now the only one who remained. He was in the House of Lords to hear his impeachment, and when it was moved that he should be committed to the Tower,

he made a short and dignified speech in his defence. He was escorted to the Tower by an enormous crowd, who cheered loudly for him and the principles he represented. The cheers were ominous to the Government, and showed that the Whigs in their lust for vengeance had shot their bolt too far. These impeachments were in fact merely the result of party animosity, and could not be justified on broad grounds. The Treaty of Utrecht, whether bad or good, had been approved by two Parliaments, and the responsibility for it therefore rested not upon the ex-Ministers, but upon the nation, which had sufficiently punished those Ministers when it drove them from power. From the report of the committee it seemed that the impeached lords had contemplated the restoration of James as a political possibility, but they had left no evidence to show that they had determined to restore him. On the contrary, both before and after the proclamation of the new King, they had made professions of loyalty to the House of Hanover.

It is impossible to say what George the First thought of these impeachments, probably he understood the principles of political freedom better than his Ministers. But the people had not yet divested themselves of the idea of the political responsibility of the King, and the persecuting spirit of the Ministers provoked a reaction not only against the Government, but against the monarch. The cheers which at first greeted the King's appearance in public now gave place to hoots and seditious cries.

For this unpopularity the King himself was largely responsible. The result of the election made him feel surer of his position on the throne, and he no longer troubled to conceal his natural ungraciousness. Unlike the Prince and Princess of Wales, he made no effort to court popularity or to feign sentiments he did not feel, and he openly expressed his dislike of England and all things English; he disliked the climate and the language, and did not trust the people. His dissatisfaction expressed itself even in the most trivial things. Nothing English was any good, even the oysters were without flavour. The royal household were at their wits' end to know what could be the matter with them, until at last some one remembered that Hanover was a long way from the sea, and that the King had probably never eaten a fresh oyster before he came to England. Orders were given that they should be kept until they were stale, and the difficulty was solved —the King expressed himself satisfied and enjoyed them. But his other peculiarities were not so easily overcome. Notwithstanding that Parliament had been so liberal with the civil list, George showed himself extremely penurious in everything that related to his English subjects. "This is a strange country," he grumbled once; "the first morning after my arrival at St. James's I looked out of a window and saw a park with walks and a canal, which they told me was mine. The next day Lord Chetwynd, the ranger of my park, sent me a brace of my carp out of my canal, and I was

told I must give five guineas to Lord Chetwynd's man for bringing my own carp, out of my own canal, in my own park." A reasonable complaint, it must be admitted, but his niggardliness had not always the same excuse. For example, it had been the custom of English sovereigns on their birthdays to give new clothes to their regiment of Guards, and George the First grudgingly had to follow precedent, but he determined to do it as cheaply as possible, and the shirts that were sent to the soldiers were so coarse that the men cried out against them. Some even went so far as to throw them down in the courtyard of St. James's Palace, and soon after, when a detachment was marching through the city to relieve guard at the Tower, the soldiers evinced their mutinous disposition by pulling out their undergarments and showing them to the crowd, shouting derisively, "Look at our Hanoverian shirts". The King's miserliness did not extend to his Hanoverians. When his Hanoverian cook came to him and declared that he must go back home, as he could not control the waste and thefts that went on in the royal kitchen, the King laughed outright, and said: "Never mind, my revenues now will bear the expense. You rob like the English, and mind you take your share." The King also wished to shut up St. James's Park for his private benefit, and when he asked Townshend how much it would cost to do so, the Minister replied, "Only three crowns, sire". Whereat the King remarked it was a pity, as it would make a fine field for turnips.

George the First had nothing of majesty in his demeanour or appearance. He disliked uniforms, and generally appeared in a shabby suit of brown cloth, liberally besprinkled with snuff. He was a gluttonous eater and frequently drank too much. When he came to England his habits were set, and he was too old to change them even if he had the will to do so, which he had not. The English people might take him, or leave him, just as they pleased. He had never made any advances to them, and he was not going to begin now. George's abrupt manner and coarse habits must have been a severe test to the loyalty of his courtiers, who had been accustomed to the grace and dignity of the Stuarts. Certainly not his most fervent supporters could pretend that he ruled by right Divine, nor was it possible to revive for him the old feeling of romantic loyalty which had hitherto circled around the persons of the English kings. Yet in fairness it must be said that behind his rude exterior he had some good qualities, but they were not those which made for popularity.

His great error as King of England was that he wantonly added to his unpopularity by the horde of hungry Hanoverians, "pimps, whelps and reptiles," as they were called in a contemporary print, whom he brought over with him, and who at once set to work to make themselves as unpleasant as possible. Much of the King's regal authority was exercised through what has been called "The Hanoverian Junta," three Ministers who came in his suite, Bothmar, Bernstorff and Robethon. Bothmar's position

in England immediately before Queen Anne's death had been difficult and delicate, and he was hated by Bolingbroke and the Tories, a hatred which, when his royal master came into power, he was able to repay fourfold. His knowledge of English affairs was unrivalled by any other Hanoverian. As George became more acquainted with his new subjects, Bothmar ceased to be so useful, but at first his influence was paramount, and he amassed a large fortune from the bribes given him by aspirants to the royal favour. Bernstorff had been prime minister in Hanover since the death of Count Platen, and for many years previously had held the position of chief adviser to the Duke of Celle. He had earned George's goodwill by prejudicing the Duke of Celle against his daughter, Sophie Dorothea—indeed Bernstorff may be said to have contributed to the Princess's ruin, and he was even now largely responsible for her strict and continued imprisonment. In foreign affairs Bernstorff gained considerable influence, and worked for the aggrandisement of Hanover at the expense of England, with the full consent and approval of the King. He found his schemes, however, thwarted by Townshend on many occasions, and so he too directed his surplus energies to the sale of places. Robethon was a Frenchman of low birth. He had been at one time private secretary to William of Orange, and had been employed by the Elector of Hanover in carrying on a confidential correspondence with England — "a prying, impertinent, venomous creature," Mahon calls

him, "for ever crawling in some slimy intrigue". He, too, was most venal, and seized every opportunity of enriching himself.

These three men brought with them two women, who were familiar figures at the Court of George the First. One was a Mademoiselle Schütz, a niece of Bernstorff, and probably a relative of the envoy who had been recalled by order of Queen Anne. She was of pleasing appearance, but made herself exceedingly offensive to the English ladies by giving herself great airs, and wishing to take precedence even of countesses. She also was a bird of prey, but as she had little influence, her opportunities of plunder were limited, and she seems mainly to have occupied herself with borrowing jewels from English peeresses, wherewith to bedeck her person, and forgetting to return them. By the time she went back to Hanover, it was computed that she carried off with her a large box of treasure obtained in this way. The other woman was Madame Robethon, wife of the secretary aforesaid, who, being of mean birth, squat figure, and harsh, croaking voice, was generally known in court circles as *La Grenouille*, or "The Frog".

But the avarice of all these was as nothing compared with that of the mistresses, Schulemburg and Kielmansegge, who were now nicknamed the "Maypole" and the "Elephant" respectively. These ladies were sumptuously lodged in St. James's Palace, but their suites of rooms were situated far apart, with King George between them, a wise precaution, as

they hated one another with an intense and jealous hatred. Of the two, Schulemburg had immeasurably more influence, and, consequently, far greater opportunities of amassing a fortune. She was brazen and shameless in her greed for gold. When, as a protest against the arrest of his son-in-law Sir William Wyndham in 1715, the Duke of Somerset, the proudest nobleman in England, and the premier Protestant duke, resigned the Mastership of the Horse, Schulemburg had the impudence to propose that the office should be left vacant and the revenues given to her. To every one's disgust, the King consented and handed over to her the profits of this appointment, amounting to £7,500 a year. Schulemburg was a veritable daughter of the horse-leech, always crying "Give, give," and it says very little for English morals or honesty to find that, much as she was despised, her apartments at St. James's Palace were crowded by some of the first of the Whig nobility, and not only they, but their wives and daughters paid the mistress their court.

The Princess of Wales always treated Schulemburg with politeness, and recognised the peculiar relationship which existed between her and the King. Towards Kielmansegge she was not so complaisant, and when, shortly after her arrival in England, that lady prayed to be received by the Princess, Caroline sent word to say that "in these matters things go by age, and she must, therefore, receive the oldest first," namely, Schulemburg. Caroline had a strong dislike to Kielmansegge,

whom she regarded as a most mischievous woman, and declared that "she never even stuck a pin in her gown without some object". Kielmansegge did not get nearly so many perquisites as her companion in iniquity. Incidentally she secured a prize, such as a sum of £500 from one Chetwynd for obtaining for him an appointment in the Board of Trade, with the additional sum of £200 per annum as long as he held it. This was rather a heavy tax upon his salary, but as the appointment was a sinecure, and Chetwynd quite incompetent to fill it even if it had not been, he was content to get it on any terms. The indignation of the people was especially directed against these two women. The English people had been accustomed by the Stuarts to royal mistresses; they could forgive the Hanoverian women their want of morals, and even their avarice had they kept it within bounds; but they could not forgive their lack of beauty, and when they set out in the King's coaches to take the air, they were often greeted with jeers and yells. On one of these occasions, when the crowd was more than usually offensive, Schulemburg, who had picked up a little English by this time, thrust her painted face out of the window of the coach and cried: "Goot pipple what for you abuse us, we come for all your goots?" "Yes, damn ye," shouted a fellow in the crowd, "and for all our chattels too."

There were two more members of this strange household who incurred their share of odium, the King's Turks, Mustapha and Mahomet, who alone

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

(IN EASTERN DRESS.)

were admitted into the royal bedchamber to dress and undress the monarch—duties which until this reign had been performed by English officers of the household appointed by the King. These Turks, although occupying so humble a position, were paid much court to, and were able to acquire a considerable sum of money by doing a trade in minor appointments about the royal household, such as places for pages, cooks, grooms, and so forth.

The King, who disliked state and ceremonial, after the first year of his reign appeared at the drawing-rooms at St. James's only for a brief time, leaving the honours to be done by the Princess of Wales. He liked best to spend his evenings quietly in the apartments of one of his mistresses, smoking a pipe and drinking German beer, or playing ombre or quadrille for small sums. To these parties few English were ever invited. "The King of England," says the Count de Broglie, "has no predilection for the English nation, and never receives in private any English of either sex."[1] But to this rule there were two notable exceptions. One was the younger Craggs, and the other Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, whose beauty and vivacity, and free and easy manners and conversation, made her peculiarly acceptable to Schulemburg and the King.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who was the eldest daughter of the wealthy and profligate Duke of Kingston, was one of the most remarkable women of her time. Her upbringing had given an impetus

[1] *La Correspondance Secrète du Comte Broglie.*

to her natural originality; she had lost her mother when she was a child, and had grown up under the care of her father, who made much of her, but who was far from a judicious guardian. As a girl Lady Mary was allowed to run wild among the stables and kennels, but her sense and thirst for knowledge prevented her from abusing her freedom. She read widely anything and everything, taught herself Latin, and acquired a thorough knowledge of Greek and French. Her father was very proud of her, and proposed her as a toast to the famous Kit-Cat club, at one of their festive gatherings at a tavern in the Strand. The members demurred on the ground that they had never seen her. "Then you shall!" said the duke with an oath, and he forthwith sent his man home to say that Lady Mary was to be dressed in her best and brought to him at once. The child, for she was then only eight years old, was received with acclamations by the assembled company whom she delighted with her ready answers; her health was drunk with enthusiasm, and her name engraved upon the glasses. Lady Mary afterwards declared that this was the proudest moment of her life; she was passed from the knee of a poet to the arms of a statesman, and toasted by some of the most eminent men in England. While she was still quite young Lady Mary fell in love with Edward Wortley Montagu, who was a young man of good presence, good family, well mannered and well educated. She was never much in love with him, and she showed herself quite alive to his defects, but she clung to

him with a curious persistency. The old duke peremptorily forbade the marriage, but after many difficulties Wortley Montagu persuaded Lady Mary to elope with him, and they were privately married by special licence.

When George the First came to the throne Wortley Montagu, who was a Whig, obtained, through the patronage of his powerful friends, a lordship of the Treasury. The duties of his office brought him to London, and his wife came with him. Her wit, beauty and originality made a sensation at the early drawing-rooms of George the First. With all her charms there was in Lady Mary a vein of coarseness, the result no doubt of her upbringing, which made her particularly sympathetic to the coarse and sensual King. He talked with her, admired her French, and admitted her into his special intimacy, though there is nothing to show that he entertained any feelings for her beyond those of paternal friendship for a young and beautiful girl, for she was then little more. But the Prince of Wales, who fancied himself a great gallant, soon began to pay her marked attention. His admiration was open and confessed, and one evening when she appeared at Court radiant in her beauty and splendidly attired, he was so struck with admiration that he called to the Princess, who was playing cards in the next room, to come and see how beautifully Lady Mary was dressed. The Princess, though the most complaisant of wives, objected to being interrupted in her game to look

at the beauty of another woman, and so with a shrug of her shoulders she merely answered: "Lady Mary always dresses well," and went on with her cards. It was soon found impossible by the courtiers at St. James's to maintain the favour of both the King and the Prince; they had to choose between one and the other, and Lady Mary was no exception to the rule. The favour shown her by the King soon earned her the dislike of the Prince of Wales, a matter about which she was indifferent, as she had no liking for him. She distrusted him, and declared that "he looked on all men and women he saw as creatures he might kick or kiss for his diversion". Of the two she preferred his sire, whom she credited with being passively good-natured. She, alone among English ladies, enjoyed the card parties and beer-drinkings in the King's private apartments, with Schulemburg and Kielmansegge. She and the younger Craggs, who could talk French and German well, and who was rather a favourite of Schulemburg's, often went to make a four at cards with Schulemburg and the King, and passed many a pleasant evening, according to their tastes, in this wise.

Lady Mary relates an amusing incident which happened at one of these royal parties. She was commanded to appear one evening, and went as in duty bound, but she explained to Schulemburg that she had a particular reason for wishing to leave early, and prayed her to ask the King's leave. George, who disliked to have his parties broken up, remonstrated, but finding the lady anxious to

go, gave her leave to depart. But when she rose he returned to the point, saying many other complimentary things, which she answered in a fitting manner, and finally managed to leave the room. The rest may be quoted: "At the foot of the great stairs she ran against Secretary Craggs just coming in, who stopped her to inquire what was the matter—was the company put off? She told him why she went away, and how urgently the King had pressed her to stay longer, possibly dwelling on that head with some small complacency. Mr. Craggs made no remark, but, when he had heard all, snatching her up in his arms as a nurse carries a child, he ran full speed with her up-stairs, deposited her within the ante-chamber, kissed both her hands respectfully (still not saying a word), and vanished. The pages, seeing her returned, they knew not how, hastily threw open the inner doors, and, before she had recovered her breath, she found herself again in the King's presence. 'Ah! la re-voilà,' cried he extremely pleased, and began thanking her for her obliging change of mind. The motto on all palace gates is 'Hush!' as Lady Mary very well knew. She had not to learn that mystery and caution ever spread their awful wings over the precincts of a Court, where nobody knows what dire mischief may ensue from one unlucky syllable babbled about anything, or about nothing, at a wrong time. But she was bewildered, fluttered, and entirely off her guard; so, beginning giddily with, 'O Lord, sir, I have been so frightened!' she told his Majesty

the whole story exactly as she would have told it to any one else. He had not done exclaiming, nor his Germans wondering, when again the door flew open, and the attendants announced Mr. Secretary Craggs, who, but that moment arrived it should seem, entered with the usual obeisance, and as composed an air as if nothing had happened. 'Mais comment donc, Monsieur Craggs,' said the King, going up to him, 'est-ce que c'est l'usage de ce pays de porter des belles dames comme un sac de froment?' 'Is it the custom of this country to carry about fair ladies like a sack of wheat?' The Minister, struck dumb by this unexpected attack, stood a minute or two not knowing which way to look; then, recovering his self-possession, answered with a low bow, 'There is nothing I would not do for your Majesty's satisfaction'. This was coming off tolerably well; but he did not forgive the tell-tale culprit, in whose ear, watching his opportunity when the King turned from them, he muttered a bitter reproach, with a round oath to enforce it, 'which I durst not resent,' continued she, 'for I had drawn it upon myself; and, indeed, I was heartily vexed at my own imprudence'."[1]

It was a peculiarity of George I. that he had no friends in the world, not even his Hanoverian minions and mistresses, who followed him here from interested motives, with the exception of Schulemburg. The English, even those who were admitted

[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters and Works, edited by Lord Wharncliff.

to his intimacy, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, had little good to say of him. "In private life he would have been called an honest blockhead," she writes, "and Fortune, which made him a King, added nothing to his happiness, only prejudiced his honesty and shortened his days."[1] If this were the case with people who were near him and benefited by his favours, how can it be wondered that he was unpopular with his subjects at large? There was nothing to be spread abroad in his favour, not one gracious act, not one gracious word or kindly speech. The more his subjects knew of him the more they disliked him, and the reaction was soon setting in full flood. The foreign policy of the Government, which was directly influenced by the King and Bernstorff, tended to increase George's unpopularity. The quarrel with Sweden on the purely Hanoverian question of Bremen and Verden, and the despatch of an English fleet to the Baltic, brought home to the nation the fact that it would be liable to be constantly embroiled in continental quarrels for the sake of Hanover.

The King, like his Hanoverians, considered his tenure of the English throne a precarious one. "He rather considers England as a temporary possession to be made the most of while it lasts than as a perpetual inheritance to himself and his family," wrote the French ambassador; and, says Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "the natural honesty

[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Letters and Works, edited by Lord Wharncliff.

of his temper, joined with the narrow motives of a low education, made him look upon his acceptance of the crown as an act of usurpation which was always uneasy to him". At any rate, George was too honest to feign a belief in James being a pretended son of James the Second, and he knew, but for the accident of his Protestantism, that he had no claim to the English crown. To benefit Hanover at the expense of England was the keynote of his policy, and when the nation began to be aware of it, the tide of discontent ran higher and higher, and Jacobite plots were reported in all directions. There were riots on the King's birthday, the crowds wore turnips in their hats in derision of George's wish to turn St. James's Park into a turnip field, effigies of dissenting ministers were burned, and their chapels wrecked. James's health was publicly drunk on Ludgate Hill and in other places; the mob loudly shouted "Ormonde" and "No George," and the following doggerel was sung in the streets:—

> If Queen Anne had done justice George had still
> O'er slaves and German boobies reigned,
> On leeks and garlic still regaled his feast,
> In dirty dowlas shirts and fustians dressed.

Disaffection spread everywhere, and recruiting for James went on even among the King's guards. In many quarters there was something like a panic, but the King went about as usual, indifferent to danger. England, he frankly owned, had disappointed him, and perhaps he did not greatly care

whether he was sent back to Hanover or not. So things continued through the summer and autumn, until in November they came to a crisis, and mounted messengers galloped south with the news that James's standard had been unfurled in the Highlands.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WHITE ROSE.

1715–1716.

JAMES FRANCIS EDWARD STUART, known to the Jacobites as King James the Third of England and Ireland and the Eighth of Scotland, to the Tories as the Chevalier de St. George (a title he had himself assumed when Anne was living), and to the Whigs as the "Old Pretender," was now twenty-seven years of age, having been born in June, 1688, at St. James's Palace. The birth of this son, so long desired, was the immediate cause of his father's ruin. James the Second was well advanced in years, and no children had been born to him by his second wife, Mary of Modena, except such as had died in infancy. His persecuting zeal in favour of Roman Catholicism had given great offence to his subjects, even to those who were most loyal to his throne and person, but they had made up their minds to bear with him, in the confident hope that, when he died, his crown would devolve on his daughter Mary, wife of William of Orange, and then on his daughter Anne, both of whom were devoted members of the Church of England. These hopes were ruined by the birth of this son, who would

be educated in his father's faith, and brought up under the narrow and tyrannical influences which already menaced the laws and liberties of the realm. It was this feeling of bitter disappointment which led to the absurd legend that the King and Queen had leagued with the Jesuits to impose a supposititious child upon the nation, and so ensure the maintenance of the Roman Catholic faith. It was gravely stated, and even credited, by many who should have known better, that the infant Prince had been introduced into the royal bedchamber in a warming-pan; and for nearly a century later little tin warming-pans were sometimes worn by the Whigs in their button-holes to show their contempt for Jacobite pretensions. More care should have been taken by the King to secure the attendance of the great officers of state at the birth of the Prince, but there was abundant evidence to prove that the child was really and truly the King's son. The young Prince's sojourn in the land of his birth was of brief duration, for, a few months after he was born, the greater part of the nation rose against the King, and in December of the same year, after the landing of William of Orange, the Queen fled from England to France, taking with her her infant son. She was followed a week or two later by the King.

The royal fugitives were received with every mark of honour by Louis the Fourteenth, the magnificent palace of St. Germains was placed at their disposal, and a handsome pension was given them wherewith to maintain a numerous court. Prince James grew

up surrounded by Jesuit priests and fugitive Jacobites. The influences of St. Germains were bigoted and reactionary, and a profound melancholy brooded over all, an atmosphere more likely to produce a seminarist than a man of action. Otherwise, unlike George the First, James received an English education; he could speak and read English fluently, and he was taught to love the land of his birth, and to believe himself the heir to its throne by right divine.

William the Third made overtures to the old King to adopt the Prince and educate him in England, but as this involved not only the recognition of the usurper, but also that the Prince should be brought up in the faith of the Church of England, William's offer was contemptuously refused. If Prince James had become a member of the Church of England (and many attempts were made to win him over on the part of those attached to his cause), he would have succeeded to the throne of England almost without protest, and the Hanoverian family would never have stood in his way. But the old King flatly refused to listen to such a thing, and after his father's death, when James had come to man's estate, he, to his honour, refused to forsake his religion even to gain the crown of England, being of a contrary opinion to the Protestant Henry of Navarre, who was easily converted to Roman Catholicism, holding that "Paris was well worth a mass".

Prince James had certain natural advantages in his favour. He was every inch a Stuart, he was tall and well made, with graceful, dignified manners,

and his face wore the expression of haunting Stuart melancholy with which Vandyck has made us familiar. But for a certain vacuity of countenance, and a lack of fire and animation, he would have been counted handsome. But his character was colourless, he lacked ambition and determination; he had no initiative, and not feeling enthusiasm himself, he could not inspire it in others. He was something of a fatalist, and early made up his mind that misfortune was his portion. Much of this was due to temperament, but training was responsible for more.

On the death of his father, James was proclaimed King of England by Louis the Fourteenth with all ceremony at St. Germains, and the French King helped to fit out for him the abortive expedition of 1706, when he took leave of him with these words: "The best thing I can wish you is that I may never see your face again". He saw it very quickly, for the expedition came to naught, and soon after Louis was so involved in his own affairs that he was unable to render further material assistance to the Stuart cause. James fought with the French army in Flanders, where he served with the household troops of Louis, distinguishing himself with bravery at Oudenarde and Malplaquet. He thus took arms against the English, not a wise thing for a prince to do who one day hoped to wear the English crown, but gratitude no doubt led him to place his sword at Louis's disposal. By a coincidence, the Electoral Prince George Augustus fought at Oudenarde too, but on the side of the English, and thus the two claimants

to the throne had opposed one another in battle. The Treaty of Utrecht, which contained a clause providing for the removal of James from French dominions, was a blow to him, but before the treaty was signed he had anticipated the inevitable by removing to the neutral territory of Lorraine, where he was well received by the duke. In Lorraine he remained during the critical period immediately before and after the death of Queen Anne, trying in vain to induce the French King to help him. . But Louis the Fourteenth refused to give active assistance, holding that the initiative ought rather to come from his friends in England. James had therefore to content himself with a manifesto and correspondence with his English supporters, who, unable to agree among themselves upon a plan of action, looked to him in vain to give them a lead.

This was the position of affairs when Bolingbroke arrived in France. He was prostrated on a bed of sickness for the first few weeks, and while in this condition received a visit from an emissary of James, who was then holding his small court at Barr. Bolingbroke hesitated. If his enemies had shown any sign of relenting, or if there had been any hope that he might, at some future time, be taken into the service of King George, he would not have committed himself to the Stuart cause, for he had absolutely no sympathy with Roman Catholicism or absolutism, and he despised not only many of the principles but the personal character of James. But, while he hesitated, news came that he had been

attainted, his property confiscated, and his name erased from the roll of the House of Lords. It was then, as he afterwards expressed it, "with the smart of a Bill of Attainder tingling in every vein," that he hastened to James, and, full of revenge, accepted the seals of office from his hand.

Bolingbroke began to repent of this step almost at once. Speaking of the first interview he had with his new master, he said: "He talked to me like a man who expected every moment to set out for England or Scotland, but who did not very well know for which". James's little court afforded ample field for Bolingbroke's satire. Like his rival, George the First, James had his mistresses, but, unlike George, he allowed them a voice in political affairs, and told them all his secrets. Bolingbroke soon found that their influence was much greater than his.

Advices received from England told James of the discontent and disaffection which were rapidly ripening there, and Louis the Fourteenth seemed more inclined to lend active aid to an expedition. Bolingbroke counselled judicious delay. He knew—none better—that the golden chance of a Stuart restoration passed when he hesitated to act upon Atterbury's advice to proclaim James when Queen Anne lay dying. But that chance had gone and the only thing that remained was to wait for the inevitable reaction in favour of the Stuarts, which George's ungracious personality was fast helping to bring about. But James and his advisers were eager for action. Ormonde, it was understood, would head the rising

in the west, Mar would raise the flag in Scotland, and at the same time James was to make his appearance in Scotland and himself take the field. Such was the plan for the expedition of '15: like all other plans it read very well on paper, but scarcely was it set afoot than the misfortunes which dogged the steps of the Stuarts came thick and fast.

The first blow was the death of Louis the Fourteenth, the most powerful friend the Jacobite cause ever had. "When I engaged," said Bolingbroke later, "in this business, my principal dependence was on his personal character, my hopes sank as he declined, and died when he expired." The Duke of Orleans, who succeeded him as Regent, leaned rather to the dynasty now established in England, and thought that the interests of France would be best served by keeping friends with it. He refused to help James in any way, and even acted against him by preventing the sailing of certain vessels which were intended for an expedition to England. The second blow was the arrival of Ormonde, a fugitive from England—he the powerful and popular leader, who, according to the paper plan, was to raise the standard in the west. His appearance in France showed Bolingbroke that the attempt was hopeless and the expedition must be postponed. He had great difficulty in persuading James to this, for, as he was ignorant of English affairs, he desired to set off at once. Bolingbroke succeeded in stopping him, and sent a messenger to Scotland imploring Mar to wait awhile. The messenger arrived too late.

Mar, acting on his own initiative, had already set up James's standard in the Highlands, and the heather was afire. The Highland clans were flocking in daily, and under these circumstances it was impossible that either James or Ormonde could remain inactive; to do James justice he was only too eager to be gone. Ormonde left Barr and sailed from the coast of Normandy for Devonshire. On October 28th James himself set out from Lorraine with the intention of making his way to Scotland as quickly as possible, but his unfortunate habit of admitting women into his confidence betrayed his secret, and every move he made was known—almost before he made it—to Lord Stair, the English ambassador in Paris, and he was thwarted at every turn. While hiding in Brittany the first news of ill-success was brought to him by Ormonde, who now returned to France after an abortive attempt to land at Plymouth. He found nothing prepared and no signs of a rising in the west. This, however, did not daunt James, who, after many delays, at last embarked at Dunkirk on a small vessel, and sailed for the coast of Scotland.

We must now go back a few weeks, and see what had been passing on the other side of the channel.

John Erskine, eleventh Earl of Mar, who had raised the standard of James in Scotland, was a man of great courage and some ability, but he acted too much upon impulse, and as a general he was unskilful, and lacking in decision and command. Like

many other public men during the reign of Anne, he vacillated between Whig and Tory, and on the accession of George the First he professed his devotion to the House of Hanover. But George refused to listen, and Mar threw in his fortunes with James.

On August 1st, 1715, Mar attended one of the levées at St. James's to disarm suspicion, and the next day he set off in disguise for the Highlands. On August 27th he summoned a great hunting match to which all the principal Jacobites were invited. The Marquesses of Huntly and Tullibardine, eldest sons of the Dukes of Gordon and Athol, the Earls of Southesk, Marischal, Seaforth, Errol, Traquair, Linlithgow, the Chief of Glengarry and several other Highland chieftains assembled. Mar addressed them in a long and eloquent speech, in which he lamented his own past error in having helped forward "that accursed treaty," the Union, and declared that the time was now ripe for Scotland to regain her ancient independence under her rightful Sovereign, King James. All present pledged themselves to the Stuart cause, and then the assembly broke up, each member returning to his home to raise men and supplies.

On September 6th, at Kirkmichael, a village near Braemar, Mar formally raised the standard of James. As the pole was planted in the ground the gilt ball fell from the top of the flagstaff, and the superstitious Highlanders regarded this as an ill-omen, though the flag was consecrated by prayer. Mar's little band at that time numbered only sixty

PRINCE JAMES FRANCIS EDWARD STUART (THE CHEVALIER DE ST. GEORGE).

From the Picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

men, but the news of his action was noised abroad, and the rising spread like wildfire. The white cockade, the Stuart emblem, was assumed by clan after clan. James was proclaimed at Brechin, Aberdeen, Inverness and Dundee, and many of the leading noblemen of Scotland flocked to his standard. In a very short space of time the whole country north of the Tay was in the hands of the Jacobites, and, by the time Mar marched into Perth, on September 16th, his army had swollen to five thousand men.

In another part of Scotland a plot had been made to capture Edinburgh Castle, and if it had been successful the whole of Scotland would probably have submitted to James. Lord Drummond, with some eighty Highlanders, had bribed three soldiers of the garrison, and it was determined to scale the castle rock at a point where one of their friends would be sentinel on September 9th, at nine o'clock at night. When they had obtained possession of the castle, cannon was to be fired, and in response to this signal fires were to be kindled on the heights on the opposite coast of Fife, and these beacons, spreading northward from mountain to mountain, would inform Mar at Perth that Edinburgh had fallen, and be the signal for him immediately to push southward. Unfortunately, one of the conspirators told his brother, who told his wife, and the secret being entrusted to a woman soon ceased to exist. The woman sent an anonymous letter to the Lord Justice telling him of the plot. The letter did not reach him until ten o'clock of the very night the castle was to

be taken, so that had the conspirators been punctual, and begun operations at nine o'clock as they had planned, they would probably have succeeded. But they were drinking at a tavern, and did not bring the ladders to the castle rock until nearly two hours later. The delay proved ruinous, for scarcely had the soldiers begun to draw up the ladders than the officers of the garrison were aroused by an express telling them of the plot. The garrison was at once alarmed, and the Jacobite sentinel, seeing that all was over, fired his piece and called down to those below. The conspirators immediately made off, and most of them escaped, only four being taken. Thus women and wine, always the two most baleful influences in Jacobite plans, defeated this scheme.

There was great alarm in England when the news of Mar's action travelled south. The persecuting policy of the Whigs had driven many moderate men over to the Jacobite cause, and the personal unpopularity of the King had taken the heart out of his adherents. So far as could be judged on the surface, popular feeling all over England was in favour of James. Mysterious toasts were proposed at dinners, like "Job," whose name formed the initial letters of James, Ormonde and Bolingbroke; or "Kit," because in the same way it stood for King James the Third; or the "Three B's," which was a synonym for the "Best Born Briton," James, who had the advantage over George the German in having been born in England. The University of Oxford was especially disaffected, and burst forth into white

roses, though owing to the time of the year they had mostly to be made of paper. The friends of the Hanoverian succession felt something like panic, which penetrated to the royal palaces, and even to the immediate *entourage* of the King and the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Hanoverian Ministers and mistresses were in great alarm, and Schulemburg renewed her former fears, and urged the King to pack up without ado, and make haste to Hanover for, as she had always said, the English were a false and fickle people, who chopped off their kings' heads on the least pretext. And this was the view generally taken in Europe. "The English are so false," wrote the Duchess of Orleans, "that I would not trust them a single hair, and I do not believe that they will long put up with a King who cannot speak their language". She expressed herself in favour of an amicable settlement of the dispute by allowing James to keep Scotland, and George England, and her views probably represented those of the Court of France. But George the First remained unmoved, and scorned the idea of flight or compromise; perhaps he knew that the worst that would happen to him was that he would be sent back to Hanover under safe escort by his Stuart cousin, and he would not have been wholly sorry. The Prince and Princess of Wales also showed courage, and went about everywhere as usual, unattended by any but the ordinary escort.

The Government were in a tight place; they had only eight thousand soldiers in Great Britain, and with

this slender force they had to grapple with conspiracies, open disaffection and threatened landings in many places; moreover, they had to keep the peace, which was in hourly danger of being broken. Disturbances in London were so many and so great that it was thought advisable to form a camp in Hyde Park, and a large body of troops were established there and many pieces of cannon. These troops were reviewed by the King, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Marlborough, and the establishment of the camp certainly had effect, for it not only quelled the rising spirit of disaffection, but frightened those lawless spirits who found in a time of national disquiet an opportunity to rob, murder and outrage.

The Government, advised in military matters by Marlborough, acted promptly and vigorously. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and the Riot Act was frequently read. Six thousand Dutch troops were sent for, twenty-one new regiments were raised, and a reward of £100,000 was offered for seizing James alive or dead. The principal Jacobites, and even those Tories who without any suspicion of Jacobitism opposed the Government, were arrested; Lords Lansdowne and Dupplin and other noblemen were sent to the Tower, and six members of the House of Commons, including Sir William Wyndham, were also imprisoned. Wyndham had great influence in the western counties, and his arrest was followed up by troops being marched into that quarter of the kingdom,

and Bristol and Plymouth were garrisoned. Thus Ormonde's attempt, as we have seen, was forestalled. The University of Oxford also felt the iron hand of power; several suspected persons were seized, and a troop of horse was quartered there. On the other hand, the University of Cambridge testified its loyalty to the House of Hanover, which the King rewarded later by a valuable gift of books to the university library. This gave rise to Dr. Trapp's Oxford epigram:—

> Our royal master saw, with heedful eyes,
> The wants of his two Universities,
> Troops he to Oxford sent, as knowing why
> That learned body wanted loyalty;
> But books to Cambridge gave, as well discerning
> How that right loyal body wanted learning.

Sir William Browne smartly retorted for Cambridge:—

> The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,
> For Tories know no argument but force,
> With equal care to Cambridge books he sent,
> For Whigs admit no force but argument.

The Duke of Argyll, Commander-in-Chief of the royal forces in Scotland, was despatched thither with all speed. He arrived at Stirling in the middle of September, and a camp was formed. At the beginning he had only about fifteen hundred men under his command, including the famous Scots Greys, and his prospect of getting more was not bright. He could not therefore attempt at first any forward movement. If Mar had then marched from Perth and surrounded Argyll at Stirling, the result might have been very different. But the whole of

the history of the Stuart cause is a record of "ifs" and "might-have-beens".

The vigorous action of the Government crushed the rising in the bud in the greater part of England. However disaffected the Jacobites might be, and however numerous, they had no concerted plan of action, and their efforts to communicate with one another were checked by the vigilance of the Government. This was certainly the case in the south, but the mailed arm of the Government took longer to reach the north, and Lancashire and Northumberland contained many Roman Catholics who were Jacobites to a man, besides others who were lukewarm in the Hanoverian succession. When Forster, a wealthy Northumberland squire, and a member of the Church of England, and Lord Derwentwater, a young nobleman of great influence, and a zealous Roman Catholic, heard that the Government had issued orders for their arrest, they both determined to rise in arms rather than surrender, and on October 7th they proclaimed King James at Warkworth. They were soon joined by a number of Roman Catholic noblemen across the border, including Lord Kenmure and the Earls of Nithisdale, Wintoun and Carnwath. These reinforcements from the south-west of Scotland found that the Northumbrian Jacobites were more imposing in names than in numbers, and the combined forces did not amount to much more than five hundred horse. Forster was placed in command, and by Mar's orders he marched to Kelso, where he was joined by Brigadier

Macintosh with a large company of foot soldiers. Macintosh urged an advance upon Edinburgh, which, as it lay between the forces of Forster and Macintosh and those of Mar, would probably have capitulated; but Forster, a fox-hunting squire, who had no military knowledge, and little courage or ability, overruled him, and determined upon an invasion of Lancashire.

After a good deal of discussion between the Scots and the English, a senseless march began along the Cheviots. The Jacobite forces received no assistance from the Roman Catholics of Cumberland and Westmoreland, and many of the Scots deserted; but on arriving in Lancashire, Forster picked up a number of ill-armed and undisciplined recruits, who were more a hindrance than a help. He entered Lancaster without resistance, and proceeded to Preston. At Preston he was soon surrounded by the royal forces, according to Berwick,[1] not exceeding one thousand men, but, small or great, they were sufficient to frighten Forster, who retired to bed instead of to battle. When presently routed out by his officers, he was so disheartened that he sent to propose a capitulation. When the news of this cowardly surrender became known, many of the Jacobite soldiers were filled with the fiercest indignation. "Had Mr. Forster," says an eye-witness, "appeared in the street, he would have been slain, though he had had a hundred lives." The Scots threatened to rush on the royal troops with drawn

[1] *Mémoires de Berwick*, vol. ii.

swords, but the leaders saw that it was now too late, and prevailed on their followers to lay down their arms. Among those who surrendered were Lords Derwentwater, Widdrington, Nithisdale, Wintoun, Carnwath, Kenmure and Nairn, also Forster and the representatives of many ancient families in the north of England.

While all this had been taking place south of the Tweed, Mar still persevered in his policy of inaction in Scotland. Every day's delay meant that Argyll was getting stronger, and every day's delay also tended to exasperate and discourage Mar's followers. If Mar had only been a general of moderate capacity, or even a stout-hearted man, he could have become master of Scotland while he was lingering in Perth. As Sir Walter Scott has put it: "With a far less force than Mar had at his disposal, Montrose gained eight victories and overran Scotland; with fewer numbers of Highlanders, Dundee gained the battle of Killiecrankie; and with about half the troops assembled at Perth, Charles Edward, in 1745, marched as far as Derby and gained two victories over regular troops. But in 1715, by one of those misfortunes which dogged the House of Stuart since the days of Robert the Second, they wanted a man of military talent just at the time when they possessed an unusual quantity of military means."[1] On November 10th Mar, goaded into action by the expostulations of his followers, marched from Perth. The next day he was joined by Gordon and

[1] Sir Walter Scott's note to Sinclair's MS.

some of the western clans, and his combined force amounted to upwards of ten thousand men. Argyll, hearing of Mar's approach, advanced from Stirling, and the two forces met in battle on Sunday, November 13th, at Sheriffmuir. The Highlanders fought with great gallantry and courage. After a prolonged fight, the result of the battle was uncertain; neither army could claim a victory, for each had defeated the left wing of the other. The Duke of Argyll lost more men, but on the other hand he captured more guns. The bolder spirits among the Highland leaders urged Mar to renew the conflict, but timid counsels prevailed. Mar retired to Perth and resumed his former inactivity. Despatches were sent to James, who was then waiting in Brittany, describing Sheriffmuir as a great victory, and so it was reported in Paris.

It was at this juncture that James came to Scotland. He sailed from Dunkirk in a small vessel of eight guns, accompanied by six adherents disguised as French naval officers. He landed at Peterhead on December 22nd, 1715. He passed through Aberdeen *incognito* and went to Fetteresso, the seat of the Earl Marischal. Here Mar hastened to meet him and do him homage. The first act of James was to create Mar a duke. His next was to constitute a Privy Council, and issue proclamations under the style and title of James VIII. of Scotland and III. of England, and his coronation was appointed to take place on January 23rd, 1716, at Scone. The magistrates of Aberdeenshire and the

clergy of the Episcopal Church of Scotland presented James with enthusiastic addresses of welcome. Thus returned the grandson of Charles the First to the land of his birth.

On January 2nd, 1715, James began his journey southwards. He made a state entry into Dundee, and was received with acclamation. He then went to Scone Palace, where he established his court with all the ceremonial and etiquette appertaining to royalty. Active preparations were made for his coronation, and ladies stripped themselves of their jewels and ornaments that a crown might be made for the occasion. But the Stuart cause was not to be redeemed by the empty parade of royalty, but by vigour and action in the field, and that, alas! was lacking. Mar's delay and inaction had been fatal, and before James landed in Scotland his cause was almost lost. Time had been given Argyll to call up reinforcements, and the six thousand Dutch troops summoned by the Government had arrived, and were in full march to Scotland.

James could hardly be blind to the fact that his cause was desperate, but if it had not been, his was not a personality to inspirit his followers. His speech to his council, which was circulated about this time, contained a characteristic note of fatalism, though it did not lack dignity: "Whatsoever shall ensue," he said, "I shall leave my faithful subjects no room for complaint that I have not done the utmost they could expect from me. Let those who forget their duty, and are negligent for their own

good, be answerable for the worst that may happen. For me it will be no new thing if I am unfortunate. My whole life, even from my cradle, has shown a constant series of misfortunes, and I am prepared, if so it please God, to suffer the threats of my enemies and yours." Mar spoke of James as "the first gentleman I ever knew," but when their long-expected King came among his nobles and chieftains at Perth, he frankly disappointed them. "I must not conceal," wrote one of his followers later, "that when we saw the man whom they called our King, we found ourselves not at all animated by his presence, and if he was disappointed in us, we were tenfold more so in him. We saw nothing in him that looked like spirit. He never appeared with cheerfulness and vigour to animate us. Our men began to despise him ; some asked if he could speak. His countenance looked extremely heavy. He cared not to go abroad amongst us soldiers, or to see us handle our arms or do our exercise." [1]

If James had acted with spirit, if he had shown belief in himself and his cause, and had taken measures promptly and decisively, there was a chance that, even at the eleventh hour, he might have redeemed his fortunes. His Highlanders were more than willing to fight, and only wanted a man to lead them. When it was rumoured that Argyll was advancing, James's council sat in deliberation the whole night, but came to no resolution. "What would you have us do?" said a member of it next

[1] True account of the proceedings at Perth, by "A Rebel," 1716.

day to a tumultuous crowd that had gathered in the street. "Do!" cried a Highlander. "What did you call us to arms for? Was it to run away? What did the King come hither for? Was it to see his people butchered by hangmen, and not strike one stroke for their lives? Let us die like men, and not like dogs."[1] Another added that if James were willing to die like a Prince, he would find that there were ten thousand men in Scotland who were not afraid to die with him. There was another factor in the situation which might have been worked in favour of the Stuart cause, had James but known it, and that was the lukewarmness of Argyll. If Mar delayed, Argyll wavered and procrastinated too, and sent excuse after excuse to the Government in London for not advancing. Sentiment goes for something, and the spectacle of the true heir of Scotland's ancient monarchs striving to regain the throne of his hereditary kingdom may well have influenced a Scottish nobleman like Argyll, who at one time in his career had shown himself not disinclined to espouse the interest of James. The Government certainly suspected him, for they sent him peremptory orders to advance, and later showed their opinion more clearly by depriving him of the command in Scotland.

When Argyll found that the Government were determined, the Dutch troops were marching, and Mar remained inactive, he made virtue of necessity and ordered an advance. He had given James's

[1] True account of the proceedings at Perth, by "A Rebel," 1716.

cause every chance, but it was impossible to help those who would not help themselves. Directly Argyll's advance became known, James's council determined on a retreat from Perth. The Highlanders obeyed in sullen silence, or with muttered mutiny, which would have broken into active rebellion, if they had not been told that the army was only retreating to the Highlands in order that it might better attack Argyll. The retreat was by way of the Carse o' Gowrie and Dundee to Montrose. During the march Mar told James that all hope was lost, and urged him to fly to France. James resisted this proposal, and only consented to it when told that his presence would help no one, and increase his adherents' danger. At Montrose a French vessel was lying in the harbour, and on the evening of February 4th James secretly left his lodging. Accompanied by Mar, he went to the water side, pushed off in a small boat, and embarked on the vessel for France.

James left behind him a letter addressed to Argyll, enclosing a sum of money, all that he had left, desiring that it might be given to the poor people whose villages he had been obliged to burn on his retreat, so that, "I may at least have the satisfaction of having been the destruction of none, at a time when I came to free all".[1] The Highlanders were indignant and discouraged at the flight of their King, but as Argyll's advancing army was close on their heels, they marched to Aberdeen, their numbers

[1] The original letter is printed in Chambers's History.

getting fewer and fewer as they went along, and from Aberdeen they retired into their Highland fastnesses, dispersing as they went. Very few were taken prisoners, partly because of Argyll's lack of vigilance, and partly because of the inaccessible nature of the country. The men, safe in their obscurity, went back to their homes, the chiefs hid for a time until the storm blew over, or made good their escape to the Continent.

Thus ended the rising of 1715, and putting aside sentiment (and it must be admitted that sentiment was all on the side of James), it probably ended for the best. From the personal point of view England would have gained little by a change of King. James was a more attractive personality than George, but he had his failings and his vices too. His mistresses would have been French instead of German, and more beautiful, but little less rapacious. His advisers, instead of being hungry Hanoverians, would have been French and Italian Jesuits, quite as objectionable, and far more dangerous. From the national point of view, the cause of civil and religious liberty would have sustained a severe check. But when all this is admitted, the fact remains that James was the heir of our ancient kings. It is impossible to withhold sympathy from those who, so long as he and his sons lived, refused allegiance to the House of Hanover, or to the many more whose sentiments, though they acquiesced in the established order of things, were expressed in the epigram of John Byrom :—

God bless the King, God bless our faith's Defender,
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender;
But who Pretender is, and who is King,
God bless us all! that's quite another thing.

By the death of James's younger son Henry Benedict, Cardinal York, at Rome, in 1807, these dynastic disputes came to an end. By the accession of Queen Victoria, in 1837, the reigning dynasty gained a lustre before denied it, and became consecrated in the hearts and affection of the English people. And this holds equally good of his present gracious Majesty, King Edward the Seventh, who is a lineal descendant of King James the First, and has inherited many of the generous and lovable characteristics of the Stuarts.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER THE RISING.

1716.

WHEN James landed in France he proceeded to St. Germains, but the Regent declined to receive him, and desired him to withdraw to Lorraine. Instead of doing so, he went for a time to Versailles, to "a little house," according to Bolingbroke, "where his female ministers resided". Here James gave Bolingbroke audience, and received him graciously. "No Italian ever embraced the man he was going to stab with a greater show of affection and confidence," wrote Bolingbroke after. The next morning Bolingbroke received a visit from Ormonde, who handed him a paper in James's writing, which curtly intimated that he had no further occasion for his services, and desiring him to give up the papers of the secretary's office. "These papers," Bolingbroke said contemptuously, "might have been contained in a small letter case." The reason of James's extraordinary conduct to the man who was his ablest adherent has always remained a mystery. Some said it was because of Bolingbroke's not raising supplies, others that James had never trusted him,

and in some way blamed him for the failure of his enterprise, others that it was due to the influence of James's woman advisers and the jealousy of Mar. It was probably a combination of all these. Lord Stair has another reason: "They use poor Harry (Bolingbroke) most unmercifully, and call him knave and traitor, and God knows what. I believe all poor Harry's fault was, that he could not play his part with a grave enough face; he could not help laughing now and then at such kings and queens." [1]

Be the reason what it may, Bolingbroke never forgave the insult, and when the Queen-Mother, Mary Beatrice, sent him a message later saying that his dismissal was against her advice and without her approval, and expressing the wish that he would continue to work for her son's cause, he returned an answer saying that he hoped his arm would rot off and his brain fail if he ever again devoted either to the restoration of the Stuarts. Henceforth he concentrated his energies on getting his attainder reversed and returning to England.

The Jacobite rising had a painful sequel in England in the punishment of its leaders. In Scotland no men of note were taken. But in England many fell into the hands of the Government at the surrender of Preston. These were treated with great severity, some of the inferior officers were tried by court martial and shot forthwith. The leaders were sent to London, where they met with

[1] The Earl of Stair (English ambassador in Paris) to the elder Horace Walpole, 3rd March, 1716.

every possible ignominy. They came into London with their arms tied behind their backs, seated on horses whose bridles had been taken off, each led by a soldier. "The mob insulted them terribly," says Lady Cowper, "carrying a warming-pan before them, and saying a thousand barbarous things, which some of the prisoners returned with spirit; the chief of my father's family was amongst them; he was about seventy years old. Desperate fortune drove him from home in hopes to have repaired it. I did not see them come into town, nor let any of my children do so. I thought it would be an insulting of my relations I had there, though almost everybody went to see them." Lords Derwentwater, Kenmure, Nithisdale, Widdrington, Nairn, Carnwath and Wintoun were impeached. All these, except Wintoun, who was sent to trial, pleaded guilty and threw themselves on the King's mercy, and sentence of death was pronounced on them. The peers were all confined to the Tower, but Forster and Macintosh were thrust into Newgate, and both of them eventually managed to make their escape.

Great interest was felt in the fate of the six Jacobite peers. In the interval which passed between their being found guilty and the day fixed for their execution, every effort was made by their friends to obtain their pardon. Ladies of the highest rank used their influence, either directly with the King, or indirectly with his Ministers. Lord Derwentwater's case especially excited compassion; he was little more than a boy, greatly beloved for his virtues in

private life, his open-hearted liberality, and his high standard of honour. His young countess, dressed in the deepest mourning, and supported by the Duchesses of Bolton and Cleveland, and a long train of peeresses all clad in black, sought an audience of the King, and prayed him on her knees to have mercy. The young wife pleaded, with justice, that her lord had taken no action in the rising until forced to do so by the news that a writ was issued for his arrest, but neither her tears nor her prayers, nor those of the ladies who knelt before him, availed anything with the King. He returned an evasive answer, and said the matter was in the hands of his Ministers. Lady Nairn also pleaded for her husband to the King, without moving him. But the most intrepid of all these devoted wives was Lady Nithisdale, who determined to save her lord though she should die for it. The King refused to see her, but she found a way into his presence. The manner in which she effected this and the brutal way in which he repulsed her is best told in her own words:—

"My lord," she says, "was very anxious that a petition might be presented, hoping that it would at least be serviceable to me. I was in my own mind convinced that it would answer no purpose, but as I wished to please my lord, I desired him to have it drawn up, and I undertook to make it come to the King's hand, notwithstanding all the precautions the King had taken to avoid it. So the first day I heard that the King was to go to the drawing-room, I dressed myself in black, as if I had been in mourning,

and sent for Mrs. Morgan, the same who had accompanied me to the Tower, because, as I did not know his Majesty personally, I might have mistaken some other person for him. She stayed by me and told me when he was coming. I had also another lady with me, and we three remained in a room between the King's apartments and the drawing-room, so that he was obliged to go through it, and as there were three windows in it, we sat in the middle one that I might have time enough to meet him before he could pass. I threw myself at his feet, and told him in French that I was the unfortunate Countess of Nithisdale, that he might not pretend to be ignorant of my person. But perceiving that he wanted to go on without receiving my petition, I caught hold of the skirt of his coat that he might stop and hear me. He endeavoured to escape out of my hands, but I kept such strong hold that he dragged me upon my knees from the middle of the room to the very door of the drawing-room. At last one of the blue ribbands who attended his Majesty took me round the waist, whilst another wrested the coat out of my hands. The petition which I had endeavoured to thrust into his pocket fell down in the scuffle, and I almost fainted away through grief and disappointment."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, many of the Bishops, and the whole of the Tory party were in favour of mercy, and some of the Whigs urged it too. The Princess of Wales did everything in her power to obtain pardon for the condemned lords,

especially for Lord Carnwath. "The Princess has a great mind to save Lord Carnwath," writes Lady Cowper. "She has desired me to get Sir David Hamilton to speak to him to lay some foundation with the King to save him, but he will persist in saying he knows nothing." And again: "Sir David Hamilton followed me with a letter for the Princess from Lord Carnwath. I told her of it, and said if she had not a mind to receive it, I would take the fault upon myself. She took the letter and was much moved in reading it, and wept and said: 'He must say more to save himself,' and bade Sir David Hamilton go to him again and beg of him for God's sake to save himself by confessing. 'There is no other way, and I will give him my honour to save him if he will confess, but he must not think to impose upon people by professing to know nothing, when his mother goes about talking as violently for Jacobitism as ever, and says that her son falls in a glorious cause.'" Lord Carnwath confessed, and was reprieved as the Princess promised. Caroline pleaded hard for the others. Though her interests were all in the other camp, she had much sympathy for the Jacobites, and a great pity for the exiled James. But she was able to effect little either with the King or his Ministers. Lord Nairn was saved by the friendship of Stanhope, who had been at Eton with him. Stanhope threatened to resign office unless Nairn were reprieved, and the other Ministers had to give way.

Walpole took the lead against mercy, and declared in the House of Commons that he was "moved with indignation to see that there should be such unworthy members of this great body who can without blushing open their mouths in favour of rebels and parasites". To stifle further remonstrance, he moved the adjournment of the House until March 1st, it being understood that the condemned peers would be executed in the interval. He only carried his resolution by a narrow majority of seven, but it sufficed. Lord Nottingham, in the House of Lords, although a member of the Government, carried an Address to the King pleading for a reprieve for the condemned lords. This gave great offence at Court, for the King strongly objected to being brought into the matter, and wished to throw all the responsibility of the executions upon his Ministers. Nottingham was compelled to resign office, but his interposition had some effect. The King sent an answer to the Address, in which he merely stated that "on this and on other occasions he would do what he thought most consistent with the dignity of his crown and the safety of his people". But Ministers were so far moved that they called a council that night, and announced not only the reprieve of Carnwath and Nairn, which had already been decided on, but also of Widdrington. Then to cut short further agitation they decreed that the execution of Derwentwater, Nithisdale and Kenmure should take place at once.

The news of Nottingham's action in the House

of Lords, though not the meeting of the Cabinet, was quickly known to the condemned lords in the Tower, but it gave them little hope. Lady Nithisdale, who had no hope of the King's clemency, determined, if possible, to effect her lord's escape. That same night, accompanied by a woman who was in her confidence, she went to the Tower. The guards were lenient with regard to the visitors of those condemned to death, and she had free access to her husband's room. Lady Nithisdale represented that her companion was a friend who wished to take a last farewell of the condemned man. She and her companion were left alone with him, and then divested themselves of sundry female garments which they had concealed about their persons. Presently the other woman left. Lady Nithisdale dressed her lord up in woman's clothes, painted his cheeks, and put on him a false front of hair. She then opened the door, and, accompanied by her husband who held his handkerchief before his face as though overcome with grief, walked past the guards. It was dusk, and Lord Nithisdale's disguise was so complete that he got safely outside the Tower, and hid with his wife that night in a small lodging hard by.[1]

Nithisdale's escape became known within an hour or two after he left the Tower, and the news

[1] A full account of Lord Nithisdale's escape from the Tower is given in a letter written by Lady Nithisdale to her sister, Lady Traquair. It may be read in the *Transactions of the Societies of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. i., pp. 523-38. These particulars are taken from it.

ran like wildfire round the town. In the apartments of the Princess of Wales there was the liveliest satisfaction, but as to the way the King received it, testimony is divided. Some said that George laughed good humouredly, and even said he was glad, but Lady Nithisdale has a different tale to tell. According to her, "Her Grace of Montrose said she would go to Court to see how the news of my lord's escape was received. When the news was brought to the King, he flew into an excessive passion and said he was betrayed, for it could not have been done without some confederacy. He instantly despatched two persons to the Tower to see that the other prisoners were well secured."

On the other hand, no very vigilant efforts were made to recapture Nithisdale. The fugitives remained in their hiding for two days, and then Nithisdale went to the Venetian ambassador's—one of the servants had been bribed to help him, of course unknown to the ambassador. There Nithisdale put on the Venetian livery and travelled down to Dover. At Dover he made his escape across the Channel, and his wife soon joined him. They eventually went to Rome, where they lived until a ripe old age.

Derwentwater and Kenmure were not so fortunate. They were led out to execution on Tower Hill early on the morning of February 24th—the morning after Nithisdale's escape. An immense concourse of people had assembled, and the scaffold was covered in black. The young and gallant

LORD NITHISDALE'S ESCAPE FROM THE TOWER.

From an old Print.

Derwentwater died first. As he was a Roman Catholic he was refused even a priest to attend his last moments, and he ascended the scaffold alone. When he had knelt some minutes in prayer, he rose and read a paper in a clear voice, in which he declared that he deeply repented having pleaded guilty, and he acknowledged no King but James the Third as his lawful Sovereign. He concluded: "I intended to wrong nobody, but to serve my King and country, and that without self-interest, hoping by the example I gave, to induce others to do their duty, and God, who knows the secrets of my heart, knows that I speak the truth". As he laid his head down on the block he noticed a rough place, and he bade the executioner chip it off, lest it should hurt his neck. Then he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul," the appointed signal, and the executioner severed his head with one blow. Kenmure was executed immediately after. His demeanour was firm, like that of Derwentwater, and he also said that he repented of his plea of guilty, and died a loyal subject of King James. As Kenmure was a Protestant, he was attended by two clergymen in his last moments, as well as by his son and some friends.

Of the impeached peers there remained now only Lord Wintoun, who had refused to plead guilty, and his trial did not come off until March (1716). He was said to be of unsound mind, and a plea for mercy was put forward by his friends on that ground, but he showed great cunning at his trial. He was con-

demned and sent back to the Tower, but he found a means of making his escape some time afterwards, and there is little doubt that his flight was winked at by the Government. The reprieves of Carnwath and Nairn were followed by their pardon; Forster also escaped from Newgate, walking out in daylight. The executions of Derwentwater and Kenmure had shocked the public conscience. The Tories were loud in their condemnation of the violence and severity of the Government. "They have dyed the royal ermines in blood," wrote Bolingbroke. Nor did the King escape odium, but rather drew it upon himself by having the bad taste to appear at the theatre on the evening of the very day of the execution of the condemned lords. It is difficult to say whether he endeavoured to exert his royal prerogative of mercy, or how far he was able to do so, when the most powerful of his Ministers were crying for blood. On a subsequent occasion, when urged by Walpole to extreme measures against the Jacobites, he stoutly refused, saying, "I will have no more blood or forfeitures". He would have strengthened his position if he had refused before. The penalty of treason in those days was death, but it could hardly be maintained that Derwentwater and Kenmure had been guilty of ordinary treason, since it was founded on a loyal attachment to the undoubted heir of the ancient Kings of Scotland and England.

The Government had put down the rising with an iron hand. They had driven James from the

country; they had imprisoned, shot and beheaded his adherents, and now the time was drawing nigh when, according to the Constitution, they would have to appeal to the country, and obtain the country's verdict upon their work. In accordance with the Triennial Bill of 1694, Parliament having sat for almost three years would have soon to be dissolved, and the judgment of the nation passed upon the rival claims of James and the Hanoverian dynasty. The omens were not propitious. The country was seething with discontent, and eager to revenge the severities of the Government. On the anniversary of Charles the Second's restoration green boughs were everywhere to be seen, white roses were worn openly in the streets, and Jacobite demonstrations were held, more or less openly, all over the country.

The Princess of Wales was the only member of the Royal Family who kept her popularity. She had won goodwill by having been on the side of mercy, and she maintained it by many little acts of grace. The winter that had passed was the coldest known for years. The Thames was frozen over from December 3rd to January 21st,[1] and oxen were roasted and fairs held upon the ice. The long-continued frost occasioned much distress among the watermen and owners of wherries and boats. The Princess, who often used the Thames as a waterway, ordered a sum of money to be distributed among them, and got up a subscription. Her birthday was made the occasion of some rejoicing. We read that

[1] *The Weekly Journal*, 28th January, 1716.

the Society of Ancient Britons was established in her honour, and the stewards of the society and many Welshmen met at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, where a service was held in the Welsh tongue. My Lord Lumley also, one of the young beaux attached to the Court, "had a load of faggots burned before his father's (Lord Scarborough's) door in Gerard Street, and gave three barrels of ale and beer, and a guinea to his servants, to drink the health of the Princess".[1] The Prince shared his consort's popularity, in a lesser degree, chiefly because he was known to be hated by the King. But one night at Drury Lane he was shot at by a half-witted man. The bullet missed the Prince, but hit one of the guards, who in those days used to stand sentinel at the back of the royal box. There was great confusion and uproar. Some one shouted "Fire!" the ladies shrieked and climbed over the boxes, the actors came down from the stage, and there was an ugly rush in the pit. Only the Prince remained unmoved, and kept his seat. His example had the effect of reassuring the audience; the man was arrested, and the play proceeded. The Prince and Princess did not allow this unpleasant incident to make any difference to them, and they went about as freely among the people as before, though they might well have been afraid in the excited state of public feeling.

Indignation was especially directed against the King and his mistresses, and the flood of scurrilous pamphlets and abusive ballads grew greater and

[1] *The Weekly Journal*, 3rd March, 1716.

greater. So hostile became the crowd that a society, called "Ye Guild of Ye Loyall Mug Houses," was formed to protect the King from personal violence and insult. It was composed mostly of young bloods from the coffee-houses who used to fight the Jacobites when they used expressions detrimental to the Royal Family, and as both sides were spoiling for a fight, street rows were frequent. Even women were not safe from violence, and it is noteworthy that nearly all the women who took part in politics were on the side of the exiled James. Addison was hired to write against these "she-Jacobites," as he called them in the *Freeholder*—poor stuff most of it was, too, and justified Swift's sneer about Addison "fair-sexing" it. "A man," writes Addison, "is startled when he sees a pretty bosom heaving with such party rage as is disagreeable even in that sex which is of a more coarse and rugged make. And yet, such is our misfortune, that we sometimes see a pair of stays ready to burst with sedition, and hear the most masculine passions expressed in the sweetest voices." It will hardly be believed that these effusions were highly inflammatory. Yet on one occasion, while the *Freeholder* was running its brief-lived course, a Whig, seeing a young lady walking down St. James's Street with a bunch of white roses on her bosom, sprang out of his coach, tore off the roses and trampled them in the mud, and lashed the young lady with his whip. She was rescued by the timely appearance of some Jacobite gentry, who carried her home in safety, but a street

fight, assuming almost the proportions of a riot, was the consequence.

These things, it may be urged, were merely straws, yet straws show the way the wind blows, and Ministers saw enough to be sure that it was not blowing in their favour. They were afraid to face the country. They therefore brought forward the Septennial Act, which repealed the Triennial Act, and enacted that Parliament should sit, if the Government thought fit, for the space of seven years. The Bill was carried through both Houses and became the law of the land. The action of the Government in thus shirking an appeal to the country certainly lent colour to the Jacobite contention, that the nation, as a whole, was in favour of the return of the Stuarts, and that it desired nothing so much as to send George and the Hanoverian family back to Hanover at the earliest opportunity. Allowing for Jacobite exaggeration, it seems probable that the people who, less than three years before, had voted in favour of the Hanoverian succession, would now, had an opportunity been given them, have voted against it. These violent vacillations of public opinion may be used as an argument against popular government. But the Whigs posed as the party of popular government, and if it be admitted, as they declared, that the people have a right to choose their King, it is difficult to see how the Whigs could logically have been justified in maintaining upon the throne a prince who was not supported by the suffrages of the people. But such speculation is

merely academic. For good or evil the Septennial Act was passed, and its passing, far more than the failure of James's expedition, fixed the House of Hanover upon the throne. That was one result, and perhaps the most important. Another was that it gave an impetus to the bribery and corruption by which Walpole, and those who succeeded him, were able to buy majorities in the House of Commons and the constituencies, and thus for more than a century prevented the voice of the nation making itself effectively heard. It led to the establishment, not of government by the people, for the people, but of a Whig oligarchy, who were able to hold place and power in spite of the people.

The immediate result of the Septennial Act was one which Ministers had hardly reckoned with. The rising being quelled, and this Act, which seemed to make his occupation of the throne certain for the next few years, safely passed, the King announced his intention of revisiting his beloved Hanover, from which he had now been exiled long. It was in vain that Ministers pointed out to George the unpopularity which would attend such a step, and the dangers that might ensue. The King's impatience was not to be stemmed, and he told them frankly that, whether they could get on without him or not, to Hanover he would go. To enable him to go, therefore, the restraining clause of the Act of Settlement had to be repealed, and a Regent or a Council of Regency appointed. The first was easily managed by the docile House of Commons;

the second was more difficult. It was naturally assumed that the Prince of Wales would be appointed by the King to act as Regent in his absence. But to this the King objected. It was already an open secret about the Court that the King and the Prince hated one another thoroughly, and the King was especially jealous of the efforts which the Prince and Princess of Wales were making to gain popularity. The Prince looked forward with eagerness to the regency, and he and the Princess already reckoned on the increased importance it would give them. The King, who did not trust his son, refused to entrust him with the nominal government of the kingdom unless other persons, whom he could trust, were associated with him in the regency, and limited his power by a number of petty restrictions. The Prime Minister, Townshend, however, declared that he could find no instance of persons being joined in commission with the Prince of Wales, or of any restrictions on the regency, and that the "constant tenor of ancient practice could not conveniently be receded from".

The King, therefore, had grudgingly to yield his son the first place in his absence, but instead of giving him the title of Regent, he named him "Guardian of the Realm and Lieutenant," an office unknown in England since the days of the Black Prince. He also insisted that the Duke of Argyll, the Prince of Wales's trusted friend and adviser, whom he suspected of aiding and abetting him in his opposition to the royal will, should be dismissed

from all his appointments about the Prince. The Prince bitterly resented this, and Townshend supported the Prince, thereby incurring the disfavour of the King. The Princess of Wales also threw herself into the quarrel, and the bitterness became intensified. "The Princess is all in a flame, the Prince in an agony," writes Lady Cowper, and she adds, "I wish to give them advice. They are all mad, and for their own private ends will destroy all." But resistance was of no avail, the King was obdurate, and in the end the Prince declared himself "resolved to sacrifice everything to please and live well with the King, so will part with the Duke of Argyll".

The King, having gained his point, and made matters generally unpleasant for his son and his Ministers, relented sufficiently to pay a farewell visit to the Princess of Wales. She told him that he looked ill, and he laughed and said, "I may well look ill, for I have had a world of blood drawn from me to-day," and then he explained that he had given audience to more than fifty people, and every one of them had asked him for something, except the Lord Chancellor. He held a drawing-room on the evening of his departure. "The King in mighty good humour," writes Lady Cowper. "When I wished him a good journey and a quick return, he looked as if the last part of my speech was needless, and that he did not think of it."

George set out for Hanover on July 9th, 1716, accompanied by Stanhope, as Minister in

attendance, Bernstorff, who was to help him in certain schemes for the benefit of Hanover and the detriment of England, and a numerous retinue, chiefly Hanoverian, which included Schulemburg, Kielmansegge and the Turks.

The King-Elector was received at Hanover with demonstrations of joy, and a succession of *fêtes* was carried out in his honour. There was plenty of money at Hanover now—English money—and the Hanoverians could have as many entertainments as they desired without thinking of the expense. The King's brother, Ernest Augustus, welcomed him on the frontier. He had acted as Regent entirely to George's satisfaction, and he showed it by creating him Duke of York. The King's grandson, Frederick, was also there, and he had held the courts and levées at Herrenhausen in the King's absence. It was not a good training. He was a precocious youth, showing signs, even at this early age, of emulating his father and grandfather in their habits and vices. He already gambled and drank, and when his governor sent a complaint against him to his mother in England, she good-naturedly took his part. "*Ah*," she wrote, "*je m'imagine que ce sont des tours de page.*" The governor replied, "*Plût à Dieu, madame, que ce fûssent des tours de page! Ce sont des tours de laquais et de coquin.*" His grandfather thought him a most promising prince, and created him Duke of Gloucester, as a sign of his approval.

The return of the King brought many people

to Hanover—ministers, diplomatists and princes all came to pay their respects, and to see if they could not arrange matters in some way for their own benefit. Lady Mary writes: "This town is neither large nor handsome, but the palace capable of holding a greater Court than that of St. James's. The King has had the kindness to appoint us a lodging in one part, without which we should be very ill-accommodated, for the vast number of English crowds the town so much it is very good luck to get one sorry room in a miserable tavern. . . . The King's company of French comedians play here every night; they are very well dressed, and some of them not ill actors. His Majesty dines and sups constantly in public. The Court is very numerous, and its affability and goodness make it one of the most agreeable places in the world."[1] To another correspondent she writes more critically: "I have now got into the region of beauty. All the women have literally rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal black hair. These perfections never leave them until the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle-light. But I could wish them handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one of the beauties of Mrs. Salmon's Court of Great Britain,[2] and are in as much danger of melting away by approaching too close to the fire, which they, for

[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Bristol, Hanover, 25th November, 1716.

[2] A celebrated waxwork show in London.

that reason, carefully avoid, though it is now such excessive cold weather that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial."[1] She much admired Herrenhausen. "I was very sorry," she writes, "that the ill weather did not permit me to see Herrenhausen in all its beauty, but in spite of the snow I think the gardens very fine. I was particularly surprised at the vast number of orange trees, much larger than any I have ever seen in England, though this climate is certainly colder."[2]

The King mightily diverted himself at Hanover, passing much time in the society of his mistress, Countess Platen, whom he now rejoined after two years' separation, and holding a crowded Court every night. Lady Mary, too, had a great success, and some of the English courtiers thought that she ran Countess Platen hard in the King's favour. Lord Peterborough, who was in the King's suite, declared that the King was so happy at Hanover, that "he believed he had forgotten the accident which happened to him and his family on the 1st August, 1714".

[1] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Lady Rich, Hanover, 1st December, 1716.

[2] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Countess of Mar, Blankenburg, 17th December, 1716.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE REALM.

1716.

If the King were happy at Hanover, no one regretted him in England, least of all the "Guardian of the Realm" and the Princess of Wales, who delighted in the authority and importance which his absence gave to them. They were gracious to every one, kept open house, and lived from morning to night in a round of gaiety, playing the part of king and queen in all but name. In July they moved from St. James's to Hampton Court, making a progress up the river in state barges hung with crimson and gold, and headed by a band of music. At Hampton Court they remained all the summer, and lived there in almost regal state, holding a splendid court daily. They occupied Queen Anne's suite of rooms, the best in the palace, but they were not magnificent enough for their Royal Highnesses, so they had them redecorated. The ceiling of their bedchamber was painted by Sir James Thornhill, and was an elaborate work of art, depicting Aurora rising out of the ocean in her golden chariot, drawn by four white horses, and attended by cupids; below were

allegorical figures of Night and Sleep. In the cornice were portraits of George the First, of Caroline, of the Prince of Wales, and of their son Frederick.[1]

During their brief months of semi-sovereignty at Hampton Court, everything the Prince and Princess did was done on a grand scale. They determined to show how brilliant a Court they could hold, and how gracious they could be; their object being to bring out in sharp contrast the difference between their regency and their father's reign. They gathered around them a galaxy of wit and beauty; the youngest, wealthiest and most talented among the nobility, the wittiest among men of learning and letters, the fairest and youngest of the women of quality, all came to Hampton Court in addition to the lively and beautiful ladies of the Princess's household.

The days passed in a prolonged round of gaiety, which reads almost like a fairy tale, and Caroline was the centre and the soul of the festive scene. It was the finest summer England had known for years, and the Court spent much time in the open air. Often on the bright August mornings the Prince and Princess would "take the air upon the river" in barges richly carved and gilt, hung with curtains of crimson silk, and wreathed with flowers. They were rowed by watermen clad in the picturesque royal liveries, and were accompanied by young noblemen about the Court, and a bevy of

[1] This room, with its beautifully painted ceiling, may still be seen at Hampton Court.

ladies and maids of honour. So they drifted away the golden hours with flow of laughter, and lively talk, an epigram of Pope's or a pun of Chesterfield's enlivening the conversation. Or the oars would be stilled for a while, and they would float idly down the stream to the music of the Prince's string band. Sometimes they would tarry under the trees, while the lords and ladies sang a glee, or pretty Mary Bellenden obeyed the Princess's commands and favoured the company with a ballad, or my Lords Hervey and Bath recited some lines they had composed overnight in praise of the Princess, or her ladies.

Every day the Prince and Princess dined in public, that is, in the presence of the whole Court; the royal plate was produced for the occasion, and the banquet served with a splendour which rivalled the far-famed Versailles. Dinner was prolonged well into the afternoon, for dinner was a serious matter in the eighteenth century in England, and the Hanoverian love of eating and drinking had tended to make it a heavier meal still. When dinner was over the Prince would undress and retire to bed for an hour or two, according to German custom; but the Princess, after a brief rest, arose to receive company, and to gather all the information she could from the men of all ranks whom she received. Her reception over, she would retire to write letters, for she kept up a brisk correspondence with many, and especially with that indefatigable letter-writer, Elizabeth Charlotte, Duchess

of Orleans, "Madame," who since the death of the Electress Sophia had bestowed many letters upon Caroline. Their correspondence extended over a number of years, until Madame's death in 1722. Madame was fond of dwelling on the past, and in her letters to Caroline she recalls much of the gossip of the Court of Louis the Fourteenth, and dwells upon the iniquities of her enemy, Madame de Maintenon, whom she invariably designates "the old toad". Like Caroline, she was an exile from the fatherland, and condoles with her on the loss of favourite German dishes. "Sausages and ham suit my stomach best," she writes. And on another occasion she reminds her, "There have been few queens of England who have led happy lives, nor have the kings of that country been particularly fortunate".

As the afternoon wore on, the Prince, having slept off his dinner, arose from bed, and took the Princess out for a walk of two or three hours in the gardens, among the fountains and trim flower beds, beneath the shady chestnuts and limes, or along the side of the canals which Dutch William had made. They were both very fond of outdoor exercise, and these perambulations formed a part of their daily lives. The members of the Court would follow, the maids of honour, as usual, surrounded by a crowd of beaux. By-and-by the company would repair to the bowling-green at the end of the terrace by the river side, and the Prince would play a game of bowls with the gentlemen of the Court, while the Princess and her ladies looked

(TEMP. GEORGE I.)

on from the pavilions. These pavilions, at each corner of the bowling-green, were comfortably furnished, and in them the company would play cards, chat and drink coffee and tea until it was dusk. The Princess, as often as not, would then start off on another walk, attended by one or two of her ladies. One night, when it was very dark, and the rain came on suddenly, the Countess of Buckenburg (sometimes called Pickenbourg), one of the Hanoverian ladies, who was very stout, tripped and sprained her ankle as she was hurrying home, and after that accident the Princess did not stay out so late.

This same Countess of Buckenburg, like the other "Hanoverian rats," had the bad taste to abuse the English whose hospitality she was enjoying. One night at supper she had the impudence to declare before several of the ladies-in-waiting that, "Englishwomen do not look like women of quality, they make themselves look as pitiful and sneaking as they can; they hold their heads down and look always in a fright, whereas foreigners hold up their heads and hold out their breasts, and make themselves look as great and stately as they can, and more noble and more like quality than you English". Whereto Lady Deloraine sarcastically replied: "We show our quality by our birth and titles, madam, and not by sticking out our bosoms".[1]

Sometimes in the evening the Prince and Princess would sup in public, and after supper there would be music, or cards, or dancing, but more

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

often they passed the evening in private, or what was known as private in Court parlance, for they were never alone. Caroline would have little gatherings in her own apartments, to which she would ask a few privileged friends, such as the aged Duchess of Monmouth, "whom the Princess loved mightily," who would tell her racy tales of the Court of Charles the Second with all the life and zest of youth. Or Dr. Samuel Clarke and a few other learned men would be bidden, and there would be discussions on metaphysics or theology, after the manner of Lützenburg in the old days. Dr. Samuel Clarke, at that time the rector of St. James's, Westminster, was regarded as the first of English metaphysicians, and was the founder of the so-called "intellectual school". His writings were widely read by rationalists, both within and without the Church of England, but he gave offence to the extreme men on both sides. He became intimate with Caroline soon after her arrival in England, and she had weekly interviews with him. At her request he entered upon a controversy with Leibniz (who was still at Hanover hoping to come to England) upon the nature of time and space, which Leibniz said were imaginary, but which Clarke maintained were real, and a necessary consequence of the existence of God. They also had a correspondence on free will. These letters of Leibniz and Clarke were read out at Caroline's reunions, and the Princess, who took the liveliest interest in the controversy, conducted a discussion upon these abstruse questions in which her learned guests took

part. Her intellectual life was lived wholly apart from her husband. The Prince, too, had his social suppers in private, but no learned men were bidden, nor were there any metaphysics or theology. In fact, on the evenings when the Prince and Princess did not receive in the magnificent Queen's Gallery, there were little parties going on all over the palace. Mrs. Howard's pleasant supper parties were often honoured by the Prince. The maids of honour used to speak of her rooms as the "Swiss Cantons," and of Mrs. Howard as "The Swiss," on account of the neutral position which she occupied between conflicting interests at Court. Mrs. Howard's social talents, despite her deafness, were very great, and her goodness of heart and freedom from the spite and jealousy all too common at court made her little parties extremely popular.

This bright summer at Hampton Court was looked back upon in after years by those who had taken part in it as the pleasantest time in their lives: "I wish we were all in the Swiss Cantons again," sighs Mary Bellenden, after her marriage, and many years later Molly Lepell, then Lady Hervey, fondly recalls Hampton Court, in answering a letter Mrs. Howard had written to her from there: "The place your letter was dated from recalls a thousand agreeable things to my remembrance, which I flatter myself I do not quite forget. I wish I could persuade myself that you regret them, or that you could think the tea-table more welcome in the morning if attended, as formerly, by the Schatz (a pet

name given to Molly Lepell). . . . I really believe frizelation (flirtation) would be a surer means of restoring my spirits than the exercise and hartshorn I now make use of. I do not suppose that name still subsists; but pray let me know if the thing itself does, or if they meet in the same cheerful manner to sup as formerly. Are ballads and epigrams the consequence of these meetings? Is good sense in the morning, and wit in the evening, the subject, or rather the foundation, of the conversation? That is an unnecessary question; I can answer it myself, since I know you are of the party, but, in short, do you not want poor Tom, and Bellenden, as much as I want 'Swiss' in the first place, and them?"

Nothing could be happier than the long golden days at Hampton Court, but there was a serpent even in this paradise, and that was Bothmar, who was there nearly all the time, playing the spy and reporting the growing popularity of the Prince and Princess to the King in Hanover. George the First had told him to keep his eye on the Prince, "to keep all things in order, and to give an account of everything that was doing". Politics, too, intruded to break the harmony. The Prince and Princess seemed determined to be of no party—or rather to create one of their own. They received malcontent Whigs, Tories, and even suspected Jacobites at Hampton Court; and Argyll, though dismissed from his offices by the King's command, still stood high in their favour. Townshend and Walpole, the two most powerful Ministers, complained greatly at first: "By

some things that daily drop from him" (the Prince), wrote Walpole to Stanhope in Hanover, "he seems to be preparing to keep up an interest of his own in Parliament, independent of the King's. . . . We are here chained to the oar, working like slaves, and are looked upon as no other."[1] It was felt that something must be done by the Government to gain the Prince's confidence and to counteract Argyll's influence, and therefore Townshend determined to go oftener to Hampton Court and ingratiate himself with the Prince. At first he made the mistake of leaving the Princess out of his calculations, "even to showing her all the contempt in the world," while he paid a good deal of attention to Mrs. Howard. As he got to know the Prince's household better, he discovered that the Prince told everything to the Princess, and she, without seeming to do so, influenced him as she wished. Lady Cowper says that she and her husband, the Lord Chancellor, pointed out to Townshend "how wrong his usage of the Princess was, and how much it was for his interest and advantage to get her on their side". But Lady Cowper was apt to claim credit to herself when it was not due. Townshend was sufficiently astute to find out for himself the way the wind blew, and to trim his sails accordingly. Before long he stood high in the favour of the Prince and Princess, and had anxious discussions with them, for the King at Hanover had begun his favourite game of trying to drag England into war for the benefit of the

[1] Walpole's Letters to Stanhope, 30th July and 9th August, 1716.

electorate. Townshend, knowing how unpopular this would be, and dreading its effect upon the dynasty, opposed it with such vigour that he incurred the resentment of the King, more especially as he frequently quoted the Prince of Wales as being at one with the Government in this matter. The friction became so great that Lord Sunderland, who was a favourite of the King, was despatched to Hanover by the Government to confer with Stanhope.

Sunderland, knowing the King's sentiments towards Caroline, had also treated her with scant courtesy. Before setting out for Hanover, he came to Hampton Court to take his leave. The Princess received him in the Queen's Gallery, a magnificent room with seven large windows looking on to the Great Fountain Garden.[1] During the interview some political question arose, probably to do with the message to be sent to the King at Hanover. The Princess gave her opinion freely, and Sunderland answered her as freely. They became so excited that they paced up and down the gallery, and the conversation grew so loud and heated that the Princess desired Sunderland to speak lower, or the people in the garden would hear. Whereupon he rudely answered: "Let 'em hear". The Princess replied: "Well, if you have a mind, let 'em; but you shall walk next the windows, for in the humour we both are, one of us must certainly jump out of the

[1] This room was also redecorated by order of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the fine tapestry which still adorns the walls was placed there about this time.

window, and I am resolved it shan't be me". This is the first instance we have of Caroline's openly taking a hand in politics, though she had long done so secretly, always upholding her husband against the King.

Late in October the Prince and Princess of Wales left Hampton Court for St. James's Palace, returning by water in state barges in the way they had come. "The day was wonderfully fine, and nothing in the world could be pleasanter than the passage, nor give one a better idea of the riches and happiness of this kingdom," writes Lady Cowper. The brief vice-reign was nearing its end. A few days after they returned from Hampton Court the Princess fell ill in labour, and her danger was increased by a quarrel between her English ladies and the German midwife. "The midwife had refused to touch the Princess unless she and the Prince would stand by her against the English 'Frows,' who, she said, were 'high dames,' and had threatened to hang her if the Princess miscarried. This put the Prince in such a passion that he swore he would fling out of window whoever had said so, or pretended to meddle. The Duchesses of St. Albans and Bolton happened to come into the room, and were saluted with these expressions."[1] The courtiers' mood then changed, and they all made love to the midwife, including the Prime Minister, Townshend, who "ran and shook and squeezed her by the hand, and made kind faces at her, for she understood no

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

language but German". The upshot of this dispute was that the poor Princess, after being in great danger for some hours, gave birth to a dead Prince.

As soon as the Princess had recovered, the Prince set out on a progress through Kent, Sussex and Hampshire, though without his consort, who was too weak to accompany him. His progress was a royal one, and he played the part of a king, receiving and answering addresses from Jacobites and others, and being greeted everywhere by the acclamation of the people, who lit bonfires, held holiday, and gave themselves up to feastings and merriment wherever he appeared. He also increased his popularity by several acts of grace, such as dispensing with passports between Dover and Calais.[1] All this coming to the King's ears made him determined to end it.

The King's differences with his English Ministers, and especially with Townshend, had now reached an acute stage. The cession of Bremen and Verden by the King of Denmark to Hanover, on condition that England should join the coalition against Sweden and pay the sum of £150,000, was a matter of certain benefit to Hanover, which had for years been casting covetous eyes on these provinces, but could be by no possibility of service to England. But the King and his Hanoverian Junta had set their hearts on it, and were ready to drag England into war with Sweden and Russia, and waste English

[1] Tindal's *History*, vol. vii.

blood and treasure. The English Government had so far yielded to the King's wishes as to despatch a squadron the previous year to the Baltic, ostensibly to protect English trade, but really to compel Sweden to forego her claims to Bremen and Verden. But Sweden found a powerful ally in Peter the Great. George at Hanover strongly resented the Tsar's interference, and sent Bernstorff to Stanhope with a plan "to crush the Tsar immediately, to seize his troops, his ships, and even to seize his person, to be kept till his troops shall have evacuated Denmark and Germany". These were brave words, but easier said than acted upon, for Russia was a great and a rising power, and however much George and his Hanoverians might bluster and threaten, they could do nothing without the English Government. Stanhope wisely referred the matter to his colleagues in England.

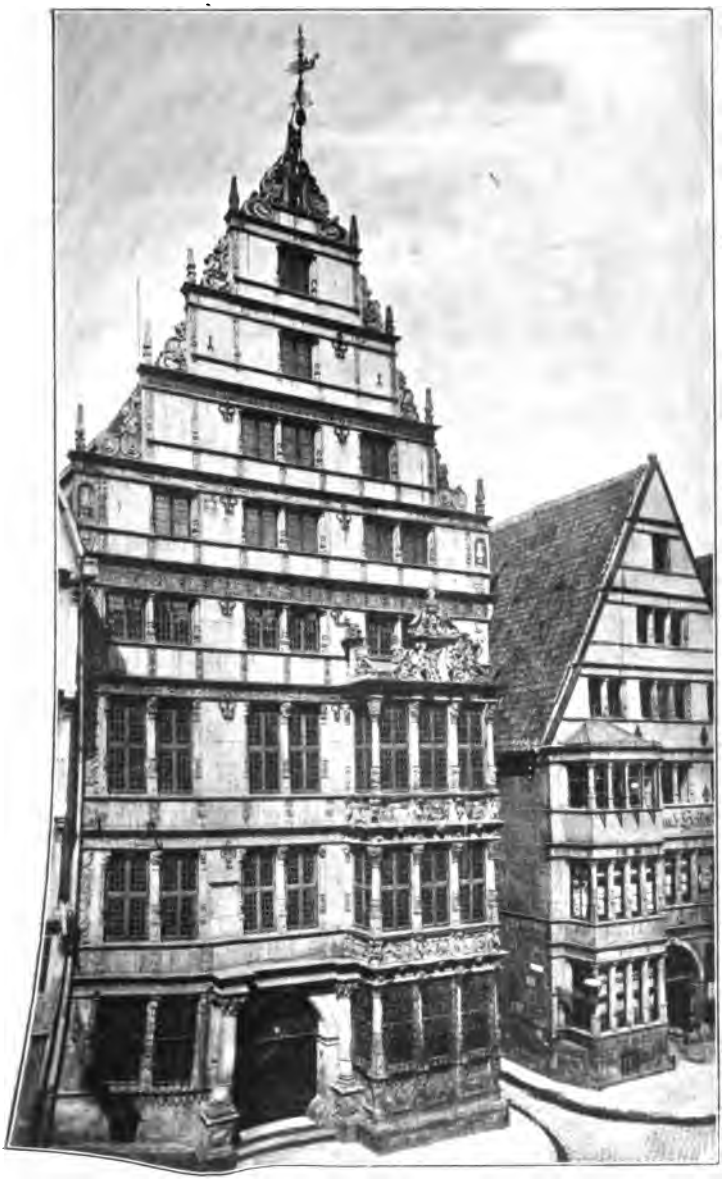
When Stanhope's despatch reached London it gave great uneasiness to the Cabinet. Townshend was determined not to declare war, and speaking in the name not only of the other Ministers but of the Prince of Wales, he strongly represented to the King the dangers of his policy, and insisted that peace ought to be made with Sweden, even at some sacrifice, and a rupture with Russia avoided. This made the King very angry, especially when he learned from Bothmar of the friendship between the Prime Minister and the Prince of Wales. He was convinced that they were in league against him, Townshend unwittingly lent colour to this in another

despatch, wherein he asked the King to fix a date for his return from Hanover, or, if he could not return, to grant a discretionary power to the Prince of Wales to open Parliament. This was the last straw. Reluctant though the King was to leave Hanover, he was determined that the Prince of Wales should have no increase of power. He peremptorily dismissed Townshend, and made Stanhope Prime Minister in his place, a hasty action which he soon after modified by appointing Townshend Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

The fall of Townshend was in part due to the treachery of Stanhope and Sunderland, but was chiefly the work of the Hanoverian Ministers and mistresses. Bothmar and Bernstorff were anxious to obtain English peerages and sit in the House of Lords, which would involve a repeal of the Act of Settlement, for that act would not allow aliens, even if naturalised, to become peers. This Townshend refused, as well as Schulemburg's demand to become an English peeress. He had also earned the Hanoverians' hatred by repeatedly complaining of the scandal attending the sale of offices. Loudly therefore did they rejoice at his downfall, but they gained little by the change. Stanhope had neither the power, nor the will, to repeal the Act of Settlement, but he was so far complaisant as to permit the King to make Schulemburg a peeress of Ireland with the titles of Baroness of Dundalk, Countess of Dungannon and Duchess of Munster. This did not satisfy the lady, who wished to become a peeress

of Great Britain, but the King pacified her by saying that in these things it was necessary to proceed by degrees. Kielmansegge also requested to be created a peeress, but for the present she was left out in the cold. The remaining mistress, Platen, was quieted by a large grant from the King's privy purse (English money of course), and as she had no wish to meddle in English politics, she was content to stay in Hanover, and await the King's comings and goings, which he assured her would be more frequent henceforth.

Leibniz, another suppliant for the royal favour, was not so fortunate. On this, the King's first visit to Hanover after his accession, he renewed his prayers to be allowed to come to England. Caroline had held out hope to him, and it had formed the subject of many letters between them. But Leibniz could not have chosen a worse moment to approach the King. George was furious with the Prince and Princess, and he remembered that Leibniz had aided them and the Electress Sophia to cabal against him in the old days. He was determined that they should not have so able an advocate in England, so he repulsed Leibniz with brutal rudeness, and turned his back upon him at a levée at Herrenhausen. This treatment broke the old man's heart; he went back to his house in Hanover, and never left it again. He died a few weeks later, neglected and alone. The King took no notice of his death, the courtiers followed suit, and only his secretary followed him to his grave. "He was buried," said an eye-witness,

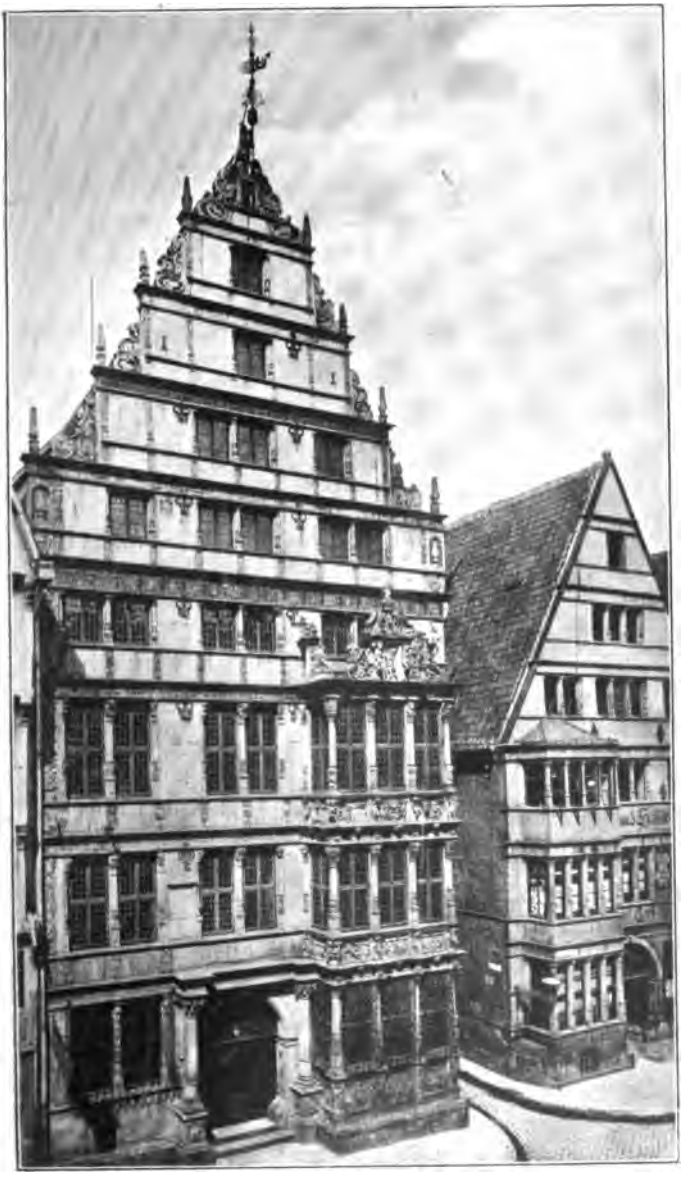


LEIBNIZHAUS, HANOVER.

(Where Leibniz Died.)

"more like a robber than what he really was, an ornament to his country." Leibniz had worked harder than any man for the House of Hanover, and this was his reward. Truly his career was an object-lesson of the old truth, "Put not your trust in princes".

During the King's stay at Hanover an important treaty was concluded with France. The Jacobite rising had made it desirable that James should quit Lorraine, and the Regent of France was willing to enter into an alliance with England. A treaty was signed between England and France on November 28th, 1716. The Dutch subsequently entered into this alliance, which became known as the Triple Alliance. In consequence of this treaty James was forced to quit Lorraine, and went to Italy, where he resided, sometimes at Rome, and sometimes at Urbino. Soon after his arrival at Rome he contracted a marriage by proxy with the Princess Clementina, a granddaughter of John Sobieski, the late King of Poland, a princess remarkable for her beauty and grace. The Princess set out for Italy, where the full marriage was to take place; but the British Government, having knowledge of her movements, meanly prevailed on the Emperor of Austria to detain her at Innsbrück. She was kept there nearly three years, and James was left waiting for his bride.



LEIBNIZHAUS, HANOVER.

(*Where Leibniz Died.*)

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROYAL QUARREL.

1716–1718.

GEORGE the First landed at Margate at the end of November. It was the King's intention to open Parliament immediately, and to settle scores with the Prince of Wales, who now retired into comparatively private life. But his mind was diverted for the moment by the discovery of a fresh Jacobite plot for the invasion of Scotland by twelve thousand Swedish soldiers. The affair was planned by Gortz, the Swedish Prime Minister, and the headquarters of the plot were found to be at the Swedish legation in London. Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy, was arrested, and his papers seized, despite his protest that the law of nations was being violated. The King of Sweden, Charles the Twelfth, was communicated with, but as he would neither avow nor disavow Gortz, the envoy was kept in durance for a while, and then sent across the Channel, and set at liberty in Holland.

The King opened Parliament on February 20th, 1717, and a schism in the Ministry soon became apparent. Townshend voted against the supplies required for the Swedish difficulty, and

Walpole, who was very lukewarm in the matter, also headed a revolt against Sunderland and Stanhope, who, he considered, had betrayed Townshend and English interests. For this Townshend was dismissed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland and all his offices. The next morning Walpole resigned his places as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, though the King expressed great regret at parting with him. Horace Walpole (the elder) gives the following account of the scene: "When my brother waited upon the King to give up the seal as Chancellor of the Exchequer, his Majesty seemed extremely surprised, and absolutely refused to accept it, expressing himself in the kindest and strongest terms, that he had no thoughts of parting with him; and, in a manner begging him not to leave his service, returned the seal, which my brother had laid upon the table in the closet, into his hat, as well as I remember, ten times. His Majesty took it at last, not without expressing great concern, as well as resentment, at my brother's perseverance. To conclude this remarkable event, I was in the room next to the closet waiting for my brother, and when he came out, the heat, flame and agitation, with the water standing in his eyes, appeared so strongly in his face, and, indeed, all over him, that he affected everybody in the room; and 'tis said that they that went into the closet immediately, found the King no less disordered."[1]

The Ministry was then reconstituted. Stanhope

[1] Coxe's *Life of Walpole*.

remained Prime Minister, and was shortly raised to the peerage. Sunderland and Addison were made Secretaries of State, and James Craggs achieved his ambition by becoming Secretary for War.

The dismissal of Townshend was very unpopular with the nation at large. It was felt that he had stood up for England's interests, and his fall was regarded as proof that the Hanoverians had gained the upper hand. Stanhope's Ministry was at first nicknamed the "German Ministry". The Prince and Princess of Wales, who had sided with Townshend, shared his popularity, and in consequence became more disliked by the King. The new Ministry redeemed itself to some extent by what was known as the Act of Grace, which set free many Jacobites, who, until now, had been languishing in prison. They also reduced the army by ten thousand men. On the other hand, they pressed forward laws against the Roman Catholics, laws so severe that it was said, if all Roman Catholics were not Jacobites, the Government did their best to make them so. They also suppressed Convocation, nominally on account of the Hoadley, or Bangorian, controversy, really because the clergy showed themselves opposed to the Whig ascendency. Convocation, thus silenced, did not meet again until the reign of Queen Victoria. This severity towards Roman Catholics and the Church of England was contrasted by indulgence towards Protestant Dissenters, and the Schism Act was repealed. The King and the Prince and Princess of Wales strongly

favoured its repeal—it was the only domestic legislation in which the King showed any interest throughout his reign.

The trial of Harley, Lord Oxford, who had now been two years in the Tower, took place at the end of June, in Westminster Hall. Oxford was conducted from the Tower and placed at the bar with the axe before him. The whole body of the peerage were present, the House of Commons, the King, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the ambassadors. Public excitement had cooled down since Oxford was committed to the Tower, and Walpole, his greatest enemy, was no longer in office. After a dispute about the procedure, and a quarrel between Lords and Commons, the trial was adjourned, and when it was resumed, as no prosecutors put in an appearance, Oxford was set at liberty. He took no part in politics after his release, but retired into private life, and died some years later, almost forgotten.

The relations between the King and the Prince of Wales had gradually become more and more strained. They rarely addressed one another in public, seldom met in private, and the Prince's friends were regarded by the King as his enemies. This ill-feeling, which had been simmering for nearly a year, culminated in an open quarrel on an occasion which should rather have conduced to domestic harmony. In November (1717) the Princess gave birth to a son, and as this was the first prince of Hanoverian blood born on British soil, the event

was regarded with great satisfaction. To quote the official notice :[1] "On Saturday, the 2nd instant, a little before six o'clock in the evening, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales was safely delivered of a Prince in the Royal Palace of St. James's; there being then present in the room his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duchesses of St. Albans, Montagu and Shrewsbury, the Countess of Dorset, the Lady Inchinbroke, the Lady Cowper, being the ladies of her Royal Highness's bedchamber; the Duchess of Monmouth, the Countess of Grantham, the Countess of Picbourg (the Governess of their Highnesses the young Princesses), all the women of her Royal Highness's bedchamber, and Sir David Hamilton and Dr. Steigerdahl, physicians to her Royal Highness. Their Royal Highnesses despatched the Lord Hervey to Hampton Court to acquaint his Majesty with it, and to make their compliments, and his Majesty was pleased to send immediately the same evening the Duke of Portland with his compliments to their Royal Highnesses. Her Royal Highness's safe delivery being soon made public by the firing of the cannon in St. James's Park and at the Tower, a universal joy was seen that evening among all sorts of people throughout London and Westminster, of which the greatest demonstrations were shown by ringing of bells, illuminations and bonfires."

The christening of this infant gave rise to an open rupture. The Prince, anxious to invest the

[1] *London Gazette*, 4th November, 1717.

occasion with every dignity, asked the King and his uncle the Duke of York to stand as godfathers. The King consented, but, at the eleventh hour, commanded the Duke of Newcastle to stand in the place of the Duke of York. The Duke of Newcastle was a mean-spirited and ill-favoured nobleman, whose eccentricities rendered him the laughing-stock of the Court, and he had made himself especially obnoxious to the Prince and Princess of Wales. All this the King knew full well, and to appoint him godfather to the Prince's child was a studied insult. The Prince of Wales was furious, but his royal sire refused to give way, and the christening took place, as arranged, in the bedroom of the Princess of Wales at St. James's. The Princess remained in bed, not so much because she was unable to get up, as because it was the custom. The Prince of Wales and the Princess's ladies-in-waiting were grouped on one side of the bed, the King, the Duke of Newcastle and the godmother on the other. The Archbishop of Canterbury, standing at the foot of the bed, baptised the infant, and gave him the names of George William. There was an air of suppressed excitement in the royal bedchamber throughout the ceremony, the Prince with difficulty restraining his indignation. No sooner was the service over and the King retired from the room, which he did before the concluding prayers, than the Prince ran round the bed, and going up to the duke shook his fist in his face, and shouted in great rage: "You are von rascal, but I shall find you". There was a great

scene; the Archbishop, who had scarcely closed his book, remonstrated, the Princess half rose from her bed, the ladies huddled together in a fright and the pages tittered. The duke, who considered himself grossly insulted, went at once to report what had happened to the King; the Prince, meanwhile, regardless of his wife's condition, stamped and strutted about the room, swearing that he would be revenged for the indignity put upon him.

The King too was greatly enraged, regarding the attack upon the duke as an insult offered to himself, and Schulemburg and Kielmansegge were greatly shocked by this filial disrespect. The duke believed, or pretended to believe, that the Prince had said: "I will *fight* you," and so had practically challenged him to a duel. The long smouldering resentment of the King burst into a flame; he had more self-control than his son, he did not stamp about and make scenes, but his anger was more deadly. When he had relieved his feelings by a few round oaths, he gave orders that the Prince was to be put under arrest. The Princess declared that if her husband were arrested she would be arrested too, and so he remained the night in his wife's chamber under guard. "What was my astonishment," says Mrs. Howard, "when going to the Princess's apartment next morning the yeomen in the guard chamber pointed their halberds at my breast, and told me I must not pass. I urged that it was my duty to attend the Princess, but they said, 'No matter, I must not pass that way'."

The news of the disturbance ran through the Court, and soon was noised abroad over the town. The frequenters of the coffee-houses and mug-houses talked of nothing else, and the Jacobites, who saw in this quarrel another proof of the unfitness of the House of Hanover to reign over them, were greatly elated. The Prime Minister went to the King and represented that something must be done, as the present situation was clearly impossible; the heir to the throne could not be kept shut up in his room as if he were a recalcitrant schoolboy, and the absurdity of the situation was increased by the fact that the Princess was locked up with him. The King was for sending them both to the Tower, but more moderate counsels prevailing, he ordered them to quit St. James's Palace forthwith. No time was given them to pack up their effects, and so getting together what they most needed, the Prince and Princess left the palace before the day was over, and sought temporary shelter in Lord Grantham's house in Albemarle Street. The Princess swooned on arriving at Lord Grantham's, and continued for some days in a serious condition. It had been represented to the King that the Princess of Wales, being hardly yet over her confinement, was not in a fit state to be moved, and he sent her word that if she liked to separate herself from her husband, and hold no communication with him, she might remain with her children. But she sent back a defiant message, saying that whither he went she would go, and that "her children were not as a grain of sand compared

to him". The maids of honour were all in tears, and it must have been a melancholy procession that made its way up St. James's Street between seven and eight o'clock that November evening. All the ladies of the Princess's household were greatly depressed, except Mary Bellenden, whose high spirits were equal even to this sad flitting, if we may believe the *Excellent New Ballad*:—

> But Bellenden we needs must praise,
> Who, as down stairs she jumps,
> Sings "O'er the hills and far away,"
> Despising doleful dumps.

The King would take no further advice from his Ministers, and determined to do exactly what he pleased. On the evening of the next day he commanded the Dukes of Roxburgh, Kent and Kingston to go to the Prince and demand an explanation of his conduct. The Prince was not at all in a mood to make an explanation, and was quite as obstinate, and much more excited than his royal sire. He stated that he had not said he would fight the Duke of Newcastle, but he declared, "I said I would *find* him and I vill find him, for he has often failed in his respect to me, particularly on the late occasion, by insisting on standing godfather to my son when he knew it was against my vill". The Duke of Roxburgh reminded the Prince that Newcastle had not thrust himself forward, but merely acted as godfather because the King commanded him, whereupon the choleric little George Augustus said roundly: "Dat is von lie," and assumed the

patriotic rôle, declaring that he was an English Prince, and all Englishmen had a right to choose the godfathers for their children, and he should insist on his rights as an Englishman, and allow no one to abuse him or ill-treat him, not even the King himself, and much more to the same effect. So the three dukes went back empty-handed. Roxburgh, who considered himself insulted by being given the lie by the Prince, refused to have anything more to do with the matter.

The Prince's fits of anger, however, were apt to be shortlived, and the Princess pointed out that it would be both unwise and impolitic for him to put himself in the wrong by taking up an unyielding position. Acting on her advice, therefore, within the next day or two he wrote a letter to the King, in which he said he hoped that: " Your Majesty will have the goodness not to look upon what I said, to the duke in particular, as a want of respect to your Majesty. However, if I have been so unhappy as to offend your Majesty contrary to my intention, I ask your pardon, and beg your Majesty will be persuaded that I am, with the greatest respect, your Majesty's most humble and most dutiful son and servant." But the King took no account of this letter. He said that professions were one thing and performance was another, and he had had enough of the Prince and Princess's professions in the past "to make him vomit". If the Prince were sincere in his desire for pardon, he must show his sincerity by signing a paper which he had drawn up. This

paper ordained, among other conditions, that the Prince should give up to the King the guardianship of his children, and that he should cease to hold any communication "with, or have in his service, any person or persons distasteful to the King". This the Prince, and the Princess with him, absolutely refused to sign, and made up their minds for the worst. On the Sunday following, a notice having been sent them that they would not be admitted to the Chapel Royal, they with all their suite attended divine service in St. James's parish church and received the Holy Communion.

The King, enraged at their disobedience, now resolved to make his son feel the full weight of his royal displeasure. He could not take away without the consent of Parliament, the Prince's allowance of £100,000 a year (though he endeavoured to do so), and he could not prevent him from succeeding to the throne; but he did everything that he could to humiliate his son, and to wound the Princess. They were deprived of their guard of honour and all official marks of distinction. A formal notification was made by the King's order to the foreign ambassadors and envoys that if they visited the Prince they would not be received at St. James's. All peers and peeresses, privy councillors and their wives, and official persons received similar notices. Orders were sent to all persons who had employment both under the King and the Prince to quit the service of one or the other, and the ladies whose husbands were in the

King's service were likewise to quit the Princess's.[1] This applied to Mrs. Howard, whose husband had a little appointment under the King, but she refused to leave her mistress, and so separated from her husband. But all were not so decided as Mrs. Howard, and this order gave great alarm to the time-servers, who had now to make up their minds whether to be well with the father or the son. "Our courtiers," writes a scribe, "are reduced to so hard a dilemma that we may apply to them what the Spanish historian says of those in his day, when the quarrel happened between Philip II. of Spain and his son, Don Carlos. 'Our courtiers,' says he, 'looked so amazed, so thunderstruck, and knew so little how to behave themselves, that they betrayed the mercenary principles upon which they acted by the confusion they were in. Those who were for the Prince durst not speak their minds because the father was King. Those who were for the King were equally backward because the son would be King; these because the King might resent; those because the Prince might remember.'"[2]

But the cruellest blow was depriving the Prince and Princess of their children. The three young Princesses, Anne, Amelia and Caroline, were kept at St. James's Palace. Even the infant prince, to whom the Princess had just given birth, was taken, literally,

[1] Several authorities say that the King inserted a notice in the *London Gazette*. But I can find no such notice in the *Gazette*—the King's orders were not published.

[2] *The Historical Register*, 1718.

from his mother's arms. The King was very bitter against the Princess, whom he denounced as "*Cette diablesse Madame la Princesse*," and at first refused her permission to see her children. In the case of the unfortunate infant, who had unwittingly been the cause of all this trouble, the restriction was fatal, for, deprived of his mother's breast, he pined away. When the doctors found that the child was in a precarious condition, they informed the King, and recommended that his mother should be sent for, but as the King was obdurate, they applied to the Ministers, who, moved by the tears and anguish of the Princess, and conscious of the effect it would have on public opinion if the child died without its mother's care, insisted that she should be admitted, and the King had to give way. The Princess was allowed to come to St. James's Palace to see her child, but the King found her presence under the same roof as himself so unpleasant that he sent the infant to Kensington, notwithstanding its dangerous condition. This move was fatal. The child immediately became worse, and when on the morrow it was seen that he was dying, the Prince and Princess both set off to Kensington Palace, and remained with the young prince until he died that same evening about eight o'clock. "His illness," says the *Gazette*, "began with an oppression upon his breast, accompanied with a cough, which increasing, a fever succeeded with convulsions, which put an end to this precious life." The child was buried privately by night in Henry the Seventh's chapel in

Westminster Abbey, and public sympathy went out greatly to the bereaved mother, not only in England, but in all the courts of Europe, where the scandal excited curiosity and derision. The Duchess of Orleans writes: "The King of England is really cruel to the Princess of Wales. Although she has done nothing, he has taken her children away from her. Where could they be so well and carefully brought up as with a virtuous mother?"[1] And again: "The Princess assures me that her husband did everything in his power to conciliate the King's good graces; he even begged his pardon, and owned that he had been to blame as humbly as if he had been addressing himself to God Almighty".[2] And again: "The poor Princess is greatly to be pitied. There must be something else at the bottom of all this, when everything is given a double meaning. They say that the King is himself in love with the Princess. I do not believe this, for I consider that the King has in no ways a lover-like nature; he only loves himself. He is a bad man, he never had any consideration for the mother who loved him so tenderly, yet without her he would never have become King of England."[3]

The excitement created by this quarrel did not abate for many months. The Jacobites exultingly quoted the well-known text about a house divided

[1] Letter of the Duchess of Orleans to the Raugravine Louise, 10th February, 1718.

[2] *Ibid.*, 29th February, 1718.

[3] *Ibid.*, 6th March, 1718.

CAROLINE, PRINCESS OF WALES, AND HER INFANT SON, PRINCE GEORGE WILLIAM.

From an old Print.

against itself. Any number of skits and pasquinades, some of them exceedingly scurrilous, were circulated in connection with it. The most popular was that called *An Excellent New Ballad*, from which we have already quoted one verse, and may give a few more, omitting the coarsest :—

God prosper long our noble King,
His Turks and Germans all;
A woeful christ'ning late there did
In James's house befal.

To name a child with might and mane
Newcastle took his way,
We all may rue the child was born,
Who christ'ned was that day.

His sturdy sire, the Prince of Wales,
A vow to God did make,
That if he dared his child to name
His heart full sore should ake.

But on the day straight to the Court
This Duke came with a staff;
Oh, how the Prince did stamp and stare,
At which the Duke did laugh.

Hereat the Prince did wax full wroth
Ev'n in his father's hall;
"I'll be revenged on thee," he said,
"Thou rogue and eke rascal."

The Duke ran straightway to the King,
Complaining of his son;
And the King sent three Dukes more
To know what he had done.

The King then took his grey goose quill
And dipt it o'er in gall,
And by Master Vice-Chamberlain
He sent to him this scrawl:

"Take hence yourself, and eke your spouse,
Your maidens, and your men,
Your trunks, and all your trumpery,
Except your children."

Then up the street they took their way,
And knocked up good Lord Grantham,
Higledy-pigledy they lay,
And all went rantum scantum.

Now sire and son had played their part;
What could befal beside?—
Why, the babe took this to heart,
Kick'd up his heels, and died.

God grant the land may profit reap
From all this silly pother,
And send these fools may ne'er agree
Till they are at Han-o-ver."

As the Prince of Wales was now forbidden to live in any of the royal palaces, it became necessary for him to set up a house for himself and his consort. He remained at Lord Grantham's for a short time, and then took Savile House in Leicester Fields, and moved his effects thither from St. James's. But Savile House was too small for his requirements, so he took the house adjoining, Leicester House, from Lord Gower, at a rent of £500 a year, established a communication between it and Savile House, and with the Princess of Wales took up his residence there on Lady Day, 1718.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEICESTER HOUSE AND RICHMOND LODGE.

1718–1719.

LEICESTER HOUSE, "the pouting place of princes," as Pennant wittily called it, is chiefly known in history as the residence of two successive Princes of Wales of the Hanoverian dynasty who were at feud with the head of the House, but it has other titles to fame. It was built in the reign of James the First by Lord Leicester, the famous ambassador, as his town house, and in subsequent reigns it became the residence, for short or long periods, of many celebrated personages, such as the patriot, Algernon Sidney, the Queen of Bohemia, during the last years of her life, Peter the Great, on his visit to England, and Prince Eugene of Savoy. It was situated on the north side of Leicester Fields, as the square was then called, and stood a little way back from the road, with gardens behind it. It was a long, two-storied house, shut off from the square by a large court-yard, and in front of the court-yard, on either side of the entrance gate, was a low range of shops. Inside, the house was large and spacious, with a fine staircase, and handsome reception rooms

on the first floor, but externally it was ugly, and the neighbourhood was hardly an ideal place for a royal residence. Leicester Fields was an ill-lighted and not very well-kept district; in the previous reign it had an evil reputation as being a favourite place for duelling, and that band of wild bloods, the Mohocks, had raced about it after nightfall, wrenching knockers and slitting noses, to the terror of all peaceable citizens.

But when the Prince and Princess of Wales repaired to Leicester House, Leicester Fields soon became the fashionable part of the town. At night it was crowded with coaches and sedan-chairs, bearers and runners, linkmen with flambeaux and gorgeously liveried footmen. Lords and men of fashion in gold-laced coats, with enormous periwigs, and ladies in hoops and powder, tripped across the court-yard of Leicester House at all hours of the day and far into the night, for the Prince and Princess of Wales kept a brilliant court here, especially in the first years of their occupation. The discontented among the politicians, especially the Whigs, rallied around the Prince. "The most promising of the young lords and gentlemen of that party," says Horace Walpole, "and the prettiest and liveliest of the young ladies, formed the new Court of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The apartment of the bedchamber woman-in-waiting became the fashionable evening *rendezvous* of the most distinguished wits and beauties." A drawing-room was held every morning, and three times a week receptions took place in the evening,

which were thronged by the most elegant beaux, the most accomplished wits, and the most beautiful of the ladies of quality. Balls, routs and assemblies were the order of the day, or rather of the night, at Leicester House, and on the evenings when there were none of these entertainments, the Prince and Princess showed themselves at the theatre, the opera, or some other public resort, always followed by a splendid suite. Leicester House became a synonym for brilliancy, and if it was the wish of the Prince and Princess to outshine the old King's court, they quickly achieved it. The fashion they set of a court of pleasure was soon followed by many of the nobility, who sought to excel each other in the splendour of their entertainments. At no time had the social life of London been more brilliant, or more varied, than in these early days at Leicester House. Lord Chesterfield, that most polished of courtiers, writes of this period: "Balls, assemblies and masquerades have taken the place of dull, formal visiting-days, and the women are more agreeable triflers than they were designed. Puns are extremely in vogue, and the licence very great. The variation of three or four letters in a word breaks no squares, in so much that an indifferent punster may make a very good figure in the best companies." He was as ready with puns as Lord Hervey was with epigrams, or Lord Bath with verses.

Lord Chesterfield—he was Lord Stanhope then, but we use the title by which he was afterwards

famous—was about twenty-five years of age. He had proved himself at Cambridge an accomplished classical scholar, and on leaving the university he made the then fashionable tour of Europe. He wasted a good deal of money gaming at the Hague —a vice to which he was much given—and then went to Paris, where, as he was young, handsome and wealthy, he achieved a great success. "I shall not give you my opinion of the French," he writes, "as I am very often taken for one; and many a Frenchman has paid me the highest compliment he thinks he can pay to any one, which is, 'Sir, you are just like one of us'. I talk a great deal; I am very loud and peremptory; I sing and dance as I go along; and, lastly, I spend a monstrous deal of money in powder, feathers, white gloves, etc." When he came back to England he was appointed a gentleman of the bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, and at the court of Leicester House he was one of the most shining ornaments. Johnson speaks of him as "a wit among lords and a lord among wits". He warmly espoused the cause of the Prince against his father, and he often delighted the Princess by ridiculing the dull court of the King, and especially the mistresses, whom he described as "two considerable specimens of the King's bad taste and strong stomach". The Princess was mocking one day at Kielmansegge's painted face. "She looks young—if one may judge from her complexion," she said, "not more than eighteen or twenty." "Yes, madam," replied

Chesterfield, "eighteen or twenty stone." And then he went on to say: "The standard of his Majesty's taste, as exemplified in his mistress, makes all ladies who aspire to his favour, and who are near the suitable age, strain and swell themselves, like the frogs in the fable, to rival the bulk and the dignity of the ox. Some succeed, and others—burst." Whereat the Princess and her ladies laughed heartily. But Chesterfield's wit was a two-edged sword, which he sometimes directed against the Princess herself, mimicking her gestures and her foreign accent the moment her back was turned. She soon became aware through her ladies, who, of course, told tales, that she was mocked at by him, and once she warned him, half in jest and half in earnest. "You have more wit, my lord, than I," she said, "but I have a bitter tongue, and always repay my debts with exorbitant interest"—a speech which he had later reason to remember. Of course he denied, with exquisite grace, that he could possibly have dared to ridicule the most charming of princesses, but Caroline did not trust him. His sarcasms made him many enemies, though his great object, he declares, when a young man, was "to make every man I met like me, and every woman love me".

Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, the soldier and statesman, also came to Leicester House from time to time. His days of adventure were now over, so he had leisure to indulge in his love of gallantry and the arts. He tempered his wit with a

vein of philosophy. He affected a superiority over the ordinary conventions of life, and never lost an opportunity of showing his contempt for fops and fools. One day, seeing a dancing-master picking his way along with pearl-coloured silk stockings, he was so irritated at the sight of this epicene being, that he leaped out of his coach and ran at him with drawn sword, driving the man and his stockings into the mud. As this was an age of over-dressed beaux, Peterborough would sometimes show his disregard for outward appearances by going to the opposite extreme. Mary Lepel, then Lady Hervey, wrote once from Bath: "Lord Peterborough is here, and has been so some time, though, by his dress one would believe he had not designed to make any stay; for he wears boots all day, and as I hear, must do so, having brought no shoes with him. It is a comical sight to see him with his blue ribbon and star and a cabbage under each arm, or a chicken in his hand, which, after he himself has purchased from market, he carries home for his dinner."[1] If we may believe the Duchess of Orleans, Peterborough was in love with the Princess of Wales, and often told her so, but she certainly did not encourage him. Her conduct was a model in this respect, notwithstanding that the King about this time spread many injurious reports against her: "He will get laughed at by everybody for doing this," says the

[1] Letter of Lady Hervey to the Countess of Suffolk, Bath, 7th June, 1725.

Duchess, "for the Princess has a spotless reputation".[1]

A more frequent figure at Leicester House than Peterborough was John, Lord Hervey, eldest son of the first Earl of Bristol, who was a gentleman of the bedchamber to the Prince, and a great favourite with the Princess of Wales. He was considered an exquisite beau and wit, and showed himself in after life to be possessed of considerable ability, both as writer[2] and orator. He was an accomplished courtier, and possessed some of the worst vices of courtiers; he was double-faced, untrustworthy and ungrateful. He had a frivolous and effeminate character; he was full of petty spite and meannesses, and given to painting his face and other abominations, which earned for him the nickname of "Lord Fanny". He is described by some of the poets of the time as a man possessed of great personal beauty; the Duchess of Marlborough was of an opposite opinion. "He has certainly parts and wit," she writes, "but is the most wretched, profligate man that ever was born, besides ridiculous; a painted face, and not a tooth in his head." Despite his affectations and his constitutional ill-health, he had great success with the fair sex, and two or three years later he wedded one of the beauties of Leicester House, the incomparable Mary Lepel.

[1] Letter of the Duchess of Orleans to the Raugravine Louise, Paris, 28th July, 1718.

[2] He was the author of the famous *Memoirs of the Reign of George II.*

The eccentric Duchess of Buckingham, "mad with pride," was also wont to attend the drawing-rooms at Leicester House, not because she had any affection for the Prince and Princess of Wales—on the contrary, she hated the Hanoverian family, and was always plotting against them—but because she thought that by going she would annoy the King. She was the acknowledged daughter of James the Second, by Katherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester, and she was inordinately proud of her Stuart ancestry, though Horace Walpole, who was among her enemies, declares that her mother said to her: "You need not be so vain, daughter, you are not the King's child, but Colonel Graham's". Graham's daughter, the Countess of Berkshire, was supposed to be very like the duchess, and he himself was not unwilling to claim paternity, though she stoutly denied the suggestion. "Well, well," said Graham, "kings are all powerful, and one must not complain, but certainly the same man was the father of those two women." On the other hand, James the Second always treated the duchess as his child, bestowed upon her the rank and precedence of a duke's daughter, and gave her leave to bear the royal arms with a slight variation. She first married James, Earl of Anglesey, and later became the third wife of the magnificent John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, and survived him. At Buckingham House the wealthy duchess lived in semi-regal state, and she made journeys to Paris, which were like royal progresses, to visit the church where lay the unburied body of

James the Second, and to weep over it. She refused to visit Versailles unless the French Court received her with the honours due to a princess of the blood royal, which, of course, were not granted her. She had her opera box in Paris decorated in the same way as those set apart for crowned heads, and she sometimes appeared at the opera in London in royal robes of red velvet and ermine. On one occasion, when she wished to drive through Richmond Park, she was told by the gatekeeper that she must not pass as the road was reserved for royalty. "Tell the King," she cried indignantly, "that if it is reserved for royalty, I have more right to go through it than he has." She was inordinately vain, and had a great love of admiration and society, always wishing to see and be seen.

But if the court of the Prince and Princess of Wales had consisted only of duchesses, young noblemen and beautiful women of fashion, it would have been much like any other court. What gave Leicester House its peculiar distinction was the presence of poets, writers and learned men, who were drawn thither by the Princess. The Prince, like his father, had a great contempt for men of letters, and for literature generally. He did not love "boetry," as he called it, and once when Lord Hervey was composing a poem he said to him testily that such an occupation was unbecoming to a man of his rank; he should leave the scribbling of verses to "little Mr. Pope". But Caroline thought differently, and she endeavoured at Leicester House

to set up a court modelled upon the one she had known in her early years at Lützenburg, and she held, as far as she could, the same réunions. Learned and scientific men were more familiar figures at courts in those days than now. Louis the Fourteenth had set the fashion among royal personages for appreciating "learned incense". In the latter part of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century the more famous writers were to be met as a matter of course in the highest social and political circles, and the position of men of letters never stood higher in England than during the reign of Anne. Tories and Whigs vied with one another in winning over to their side the ablest writers of the day. It is not contended that this advanced the higher interests of literature, but an age which produced Pope, Addison, Swift, Congreve, Defoe, Gay and Steele (to name only a few) cannot be considered barren. There was an intimate link between diplomacy and letters. Matthew Prior, in return for scribbling some indifferent verses, rose to become ambassador at Paris; Addison, who undertook a good deal of diplomatic work, became eventually Secretary of State; Gay had dabbled in diplomacy; and Steele, from being a trooper in the Guards, was advanced to a lucrative position in the Civil Service. Many men of letters, at the advice of their patrons, took Holy Orders, and the Church was regarded as a convenient way of providing for their necessities; Swift was an instance of this, and many another besides. The press, as we understand it to-day,

was then only in its infancy; but in the patronage extended by statesmen and noble lords who wished to play the part of Mæcenas to pamphleteers, playwrights, poetasters and so forth, we see the first recognition of what is now known as the power of the press. When George the First ascended the throne, nearly all the cleverest pamphleteers were Tories or Jacobites, and the King was indifferent whether they were so or not. But Caroline saw the necessity of employing some able writers on the side of the dynasty, and so counteracting the Jacobite publications. In pursuance of this policy, after the Jacobite rising, Addison was employed by the Government to write up, in *The Freeholder*, the Hanoverian succession and Whig policy, and he was rewarded shortly after by a lucrative appointment. His social ambition led him to marry the Dowager Countess of Warwick, a haughty virago, who treated him more like a lackey than a husband. Both Addison and the countess were often to be seen at Leicester House.

Pope, who had just had his famous quarrel with Addison, often came to Leicester House, and was on friendly terms with Mrs. Howard and many of the maids of honour. He was probably brought before the notice of the Princess of Wales by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu before she left for Constantinople. He had already achieved fame by his *Rape of the Lock* and his *Pastorals*, and he had published the first four books of his translation of the *Iliad*. He was a Roman Catholic, had entered upon

his career as a Tory with a leaning to Jacobitism; his patrons had been Oxford, Harcourt and Bolingbroke, all fallen statesmen now. But these things made no difference to Caroline, who quickly recognised the poet's genius, and with her genius stood before every other consideration.

Gay, the poet, found his way here too, careless, good-humoured, popular with every one. He had first made Caroline's acquaintance at Hanover, whither he went as secretary to Lord Clarendon on his special mission just before the death of Queen Anne. He wrote to Swift from there, speaking of himself as strutting in silver and blue through the clipped avenues of Herrenhausen, perfecting himself in the diplomatic arts "of bowing profoundly, speaking deliberately, and wearing both sides of my long periwig before". He was a very necessitous poet, always in difficulties, and he hit upon a plan of making a little money, and at the same time winning the favour of the Court. He wrote a long poem to the Princess of Wales, in which he mingled her praises with his necessities. The only practical result of this effusion was that Caroline went to Drury Lane to honour the first performance of Gay's next effort, which he described as a tragi-comi-pastoral-farce, "*What d'ye call it?*" a burlesque on the plays of the time; it was a failure, notwithstanding this distinguished patronage. Gay at this time was a far greater social success than a literary one, and the maids of honour especially delighted in his sunny, cheery presence.

Tickell, the poet-laureate, a favourite of Addison, also paid his court to the Princess, and wrote odes to the Royal Family, notably his *Royal Progress*, but Caroline did not care for him, despite his fulsome verses. Voltaire and Swift did not come until later, towards the end of the reign. Arbuthnot, the fashionable physician and the friend of Chesterfield, Pulteney and Mrs. Howard, was often seen at Leicester House, though he no longer held a position at court, and through him Caroline made the acquaintance of many of the rising writers of the day. Arbuthnot was the "friend, doctor and adviser of all the wits". Pope wrote of him in dedicating one of his volumes :—

> Friend of my life, which did not you prolong,
> The world had wanted many an idle song.

Of course the broad-viewed Dr. Samuel Clarke came to Leicester House to continue Caroline's weekly discussions on metaphysical, theological and philosophical subjects. He brought with him many of his way of thinking, notably Whiston, who had been compelled to resign his Cambridge professorship in consequence of having written a book to show that the accepted doctrine of the Trinity was erroneous. He then came to live in London, and started a society for promoting what he called "Primitive Christianity". This society held weekly meetings at his house in Cross Street, Hatton Garden, and it is very likely that Caroline sometimes attended these gatherings *incognito*. Whiston was extremely plain-spoken, and often at the Prin-

cess's discussions used her roughly, treating her remarks with contempt; but Caroline took his reproofs good-humouredly, and helped him all she could.

Newton, an old man then, came sometimes to Leicester House, carried across in his chair from his house in St. Martin's Street, hard by. Caroline had a great veneration and love for him, and she always gave him the first place at her gatherings, and listened with reverence to all he had to say. She often saw Newton in private, and consulted him about the education of her children. It was Caroline who made the remark, absurdly credited to George the First, that it was the greatest glory of the House of Hanover to have such subjects as Newton in one country and Leibniz in another.

These intellectual friendships were the delight of Caroline's life, yet she had frequently to interrupt them to amuse her pompous little husband, and enter into the brilliant inanities of the court. She combined with these higher joys a keen sense of more material pleasures, and she loved music and the dance and the gaming table as much as any of her courtiers. These grave, learned and scientific men did not follow the Princess to her crowded saloons, but her assemblies always contained a sprinkling of the more famous men of letters. Literature became the fashion of the hour, and Leicester House had quite a literary atmosphere. Of course all the witty young noblemen and poets set their talents to work to praise the charms of the Princess

and her ladies. "Characters" were all the vogue, and every lady, from the Princess down to the youngest maid of honour, had her character elaborately written in prose, or was immortalised in verse. If all the poetry written about Caroline and her ladies were collected, it would fill a large volume.

The most be-rhymed of all the beauties after the Princess was Mary Lepel. The honours were divided between her and Mary Bellenden; an old ballad runs:—

What pranks are played behind the scenes,
And who at Court the belle—
Some swear it is the Bellenden,
And others say la Pell.

After Mary Lepel married Lord Hervey, Voltaire, who met her during his visit to England, celebrated her beauty in English verse, as follows:—

Hervey, would you know the passion
You have kindled in my breast?
Trifling is the inclination
That by words can be expressed.

In my silence see the lover;
True love is by silence known;
In my eyes you'll best discover,
All the power of your own.

Gay wrote of her:—

Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepel.

Miss Lepel was married secretly to Lord Hervey, and when her marriage became known, Lords Chesterfield and Bath indited a string of verses, and sent them to her under the name of a begging poet. The young lady sent the usual fee, and when the authorship was disclosed she was much "miffed," not

at the licence of the verses, to which she might well have objected, but to being "bit," to use the fashionable slang of the period. Some of the verses are unquotable, others run as follows:—

Bright Venus yet never saw bedded
So perfect a beau and a belle,
As when Hervey the handsome was wedded
To the beautiful Molly Lepel.

So powerful her charms, and so moving,
They would warm an old monk in his cell,
Should the Pope himself ever go roaming,
He would follow dear Molly Lepel.

Had I Hanover, Bremen, and Verden,
And likewise the Duchy of Zell!
I'd part with them all for a farthing,
To have my dear Molly Lepel.

Should Venus now rise from the ocean,
And naked appear in her shell,
She would not cause half the emotion,
That we feel for dear Molly Lepel.

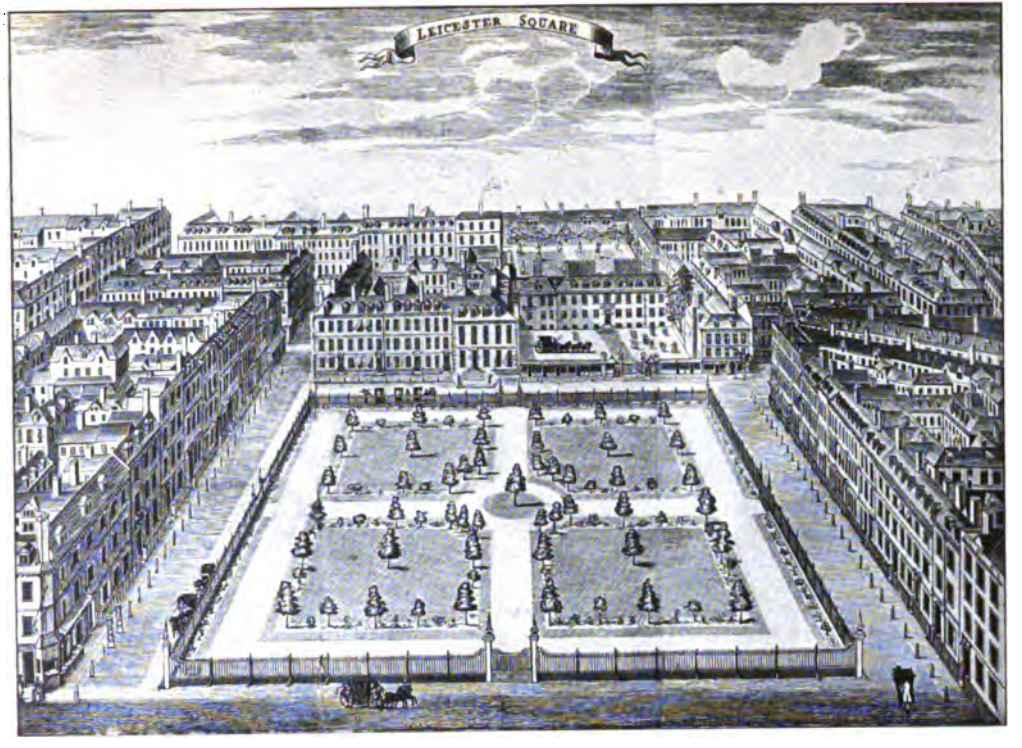
Old Orpheus, that husband so civil,
He followed his wife down to hell,
And who would not go to the devil,
For the sake of dear Molly Lepel.

In a bed you have seen banks of roses;
Would you know a more delicate smell,
Ask the fortunate man who reposes
On the bosom of Molly Lepel.

Or were I the King of Great Britain
To choose a minister well,
And support the throne that I sit on,
I'd have under me Molly Lepel.

Mary Bellenden rivalled Mary Lepel in loveliness. Gay writes of her in his *Ballad of Damon and Cupid*:—

So well I'm known at Court
None ask where Cupid dwells;
But readily resort,
To Bellenden's or Lepel's.



LEICESTER HOUSE, LEICESTER SQUARE, TEMP. GEORGE I.

And again he mentions her and her sister Margaret in his *Welcome to Pope from Greece*:—

> Madge Bellenden, the tallest of the land,
> And smiling Mary, soft and fair as down.

Like many of the Princess's young ladies, Mary Bellenden was often in want of money. On one occasion she writes to Mrs. Howard from Bath: "Oh Gad, I am so sick of bills; for my part I believe I shall never be able to hear them mentioned without casting up my accounts—bills are *accounts*, you know. I do not know how your bills go in London, but I am sure mine are not dropped, for I paid one this morning as long as my arm and as broad as my ——. I intend to send you a letter of attorney, to enable you to dispose of my goods before I may leave this place—such is my condition." [1]

The Prince of Wales, who was early attracted by Mary Bellenden's charms, made addresses to her which she did not reciprocate. The Prince was not accustomed to having his advances slighted, and knowing that Mary Bellenden had her little bills, as a hint by no means delicate, he sat down one evening by her side, and taking out his purse began to count his money. The lively Bellenden bore it for a while, but when he was about to tell his guineas all over again, she cried: "Sir, I cannot bear it; if you count your money any more, I will go out of the room". This remonstrance had so little

[1] Mary Bellenden (Mrs. John Campbell) to Mrs. Howard, Bath, 1720.

effect that he proceeded to press his attentions upon her, and jingled the gold in her ear. Thereupon she lost her temper and knocked the purse out of his hand, scattering the guineas far and wide, and ran out of the room. In other ways, too, she showed her disapproval of his advances, for, writing later to Mrs. Howard, about a new maid of honour, she says: "I hope you will put her a little in the way of behaving before the Princess, such as not turning her back; and one thing runs mightily in my head, which is, crossing her arms, *as I did to the Prince*, and told him I was not cold, but I liked to stand so".[1] Mary Bellenden had a great bulwark to her virtue in the fact that she was deeply in love with Colonel John Campbell, many years later the Duke of Argyll, who was then one of the Prince's grooms of the bedchamber. The Prince discovered that she was in love, though he did not know with whom, and, so far from showing resentment, he told her that if she would promise not to marry without his knowledge, he would do what he could for her and her lover. But Mary Bellenden distrusted the Prince's good faith, and a year or two later secretly married Campbell. The Prince did not dismiss Colonel Campbell from court, but he never forgave Mary, and whenever she came to a drawing-room, he would whisper reproaches in her ear, or shake his finger at her and scowl. The lady did not care, as she had married the man she loved.

Even the prudish Miss Meadows found a poet,

[1] *Suffolk Correspondence.*

for Doddington in one of his trifles couples her name with that of Lady Hervey :—

> As chaste as Hervey or Miss Meadows,

and Pope, in some lines addressed to Sophy Howe, introduces Meadows in no amiable light :—

> What is prudery?
> 'Tis a beldam
> Seen with wit and beauty seldom,
> 'Tis a fear that starts at shadows;
> 'Tis (no 'tisn't) like Miss Meadows;
> 'Tis a virgin hard of feature,
> Old and void of all good nature,
> Lean and fretful; would seem wise
> Yet plays the fool before she dies.
> 'Tis an ugly envious shrew
> That rails at dear Lepel and you.

Sophia Howe, whose wild spirits were responsible for many lively scenes at Leicester House, often figured in verse. Gay alludes to her giddiness when he says :—

> Perhaps Miss Howe came there by chance,
> Nor knows with whom, nor why she comes along.

This young lady's flightiness is shown in her letters. She thought no life worth living except the life at court, and when she was in the country on a visit to her mother, she wrote to Mrs. Howard : "You will think, I suppose, that I have had no flirtation since I am here; but you will be mistaken; for the moment I entered Farnham, a man, in his own hair, cropped, and a brown coat, stopped the coach to bid me welcome, in a very gallant way; and we had a visit, yesterday, from a country clown of this place, who did all he could to persuade me

to be tired of the influence and fatigue of a court life, and intimated that a quiet country one would be very agreeable after it, and he would answer that in seven years I should have a little court of my own. I think this is very well advanced for the short time I have been here."[1] And again, when she was anxious to return to Leicester House, she writes: "Pray, desire my Lord Lumley[2] to send the coach to Godalming next Wednesday, that I may go off on Thursday, which will be a happy day, for I am very weary of The Holt, though I bragged to Carteret[3] that I was very well pleased. . . . If my Lord Lumley does not send the coach, he never shall have the least flirtation more with me. Perhaps he may be glad of me for a *summer suit* next year at Richmond, when he has no other business upon his days. Next Wednesday the coach must come, or I die. . . . One good thing I have got by the long time I have been here, which is, the being more sensible than ever I was of my happiness in being maid of honour; I won't say God preserve me so neither, that would not be so well."[4]

Alas! poor Miss Howe did not long remain a maid of honour. Soon after these letters were written she was betrayed into a fatal indiscretion;

[1] Miss Howe to Mrs. Howard, The Holt, Farnham, 1719 (*Suffolk Correspondence*).

[2] Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales, eldest son of Lord Scarborough.

[3] The Hon. Bridget Carteret, a maid of honour.

[4] Miss Howe to Mrs. Howard, The Holt, Farnham, 1st October, 1719.

she was expelled from court, and died a few years later of a broken heart. Her fall made a great sensation in the Princess's household, so great that it shows that such cases were uncommon, for however much the maids of honour might flirt, and however free might be their wit and conversation, like their mistress, they kept their virtue intact. Poor Sophia's betrayer was Anthony Lowther, brother of Lord Lonsdale; he was base enough not to marry her. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, in a poem written nearly twenty years later, introduces the tale of this unfortunate girl's ruin :—

> Poor girl! she once was thought extremely fair,
> Till worn by love, and tortured by despair.
> Her pining cheek betray'd the inward smart;
> Her breaking looks foretold a breaking heart.
> At Leicester House her passion first began,
> And Nunty Lowther was a proper man:
> But when the Princess did to Kew remove,
> She could not bear the absence of her love,
> But flew away. . . .

Mrs. Howard was the most be-rhymed of the more mature ladies. Lord Peterborough penned her praises in both prose and verse. Perhaps the best known of his effusions is the poem beginning :—

> I said to my heart, between sleeping and waking,
> "Thou wild thing that always art leaping or aching,
> What black, brown, or fair, in what clime, in what nation,
> By turns has not taught thee a pit-a-pat-ation,"

and ending :—

> Oh wonderful creature! a woman of reason!
> Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season;
> When so easy to guess who this angel should be,
> Would one think Mrs. Howard ne'er dreamt it was she?

Pope, who held her in high esteem, coins a compliment even out of her deafness :—

> When all the world conspires to praise her
> The woman's deaf, and does not hear.

And Gay :—

> Now to my heart the glance of Howard flies.

Mrs. Howard continued to be the recipient of the Prince's attentions in the intervals of his unsuccessful overtures to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Mary Bellenden and others; yet she conducted herself with so much discretion, and was so popular, that every one about the court, from the Princess downwards, conspired to ignore the *liaison* existing between them. But Mrs. Howard's spendthrift husband was so inconsiderate as to interrupt this harmony. He held the post of a gentleman of the bedchamber to the King, and under the new rule the ladies whose husbands were in the King's service were to quit the service of the Princess. Mrs. Howard had refused, but Howard now insisted that his wife should leave Leicester House and return to him. Howard's action was instigated by the King, who saw in this an opportunity of annoying the Prince and Princess of Wales. Mrs. Howard again refused to obey, and the aggrieved husband went one night, half-tipsy, to Leicester House, and noisily demanded his wife. He was promptly turned out by the lackeys, but the scandal went abroad. Howard then adopted a loftier tone, and made an appeal to the Arch-

bishop of Canterbury, beseeching his Grace to use his influence to induce his wife to return to her lawful spouse. Thereon the aged Archbishop wrote a lengthy letter to the Princess, pointing out the obligations of the married state, the duties of the wife and the privileges of the husband, as laid down by St. Peter and St. Paul, and asking her to send Mrs. Howard back to her husband. The Princess took no notice of this homily, and Mrs. Howard remained where she was.

Howard, therefore, went to Leicester House and forced himself into the Princess's presence. He made a great scene — he declared that he would have his wife even if he had to pull her out of the Princess's coach. Caroline spiritedly told him "to do it if he dared". "Though," she said years later, when relating this scene to Lord Hervey, "I was horribly afraid of him (for we were *tête-à-tête*) all the while I was thus playing the bully. What added to my fear on this occasion was that as I knew him to be *so brutal*, as well as a little mad, and seldom quite sober, so I did not think it impossible that he might throw me out of the window. . . . But as soon as I got near the door, and thought myself safe from being thrown out of the window, *je pris mon grand ton de Reine, et je disois*, 'I would be glad to see who should dare to open my coach door and take out one of my servants. . . .' Then I told him that my resolution was positively neither to force his wife to go to him, if she had no mind to it, nor

to keep her if she had." Howard blustered and swore without any respect for the Princess's presence, and declared that he would go to the King. Whereupon the Princess said: "The King has nothing to do with my servants, and for that reason you may save yourself the trouble." So Howard took his leave.

Poor Mrs. Howard was in great alarm, as she dreaded to return to her husband, who had neglected her and used her cruelly. Some of the lords about Leicester House formed a guard to protect her against forcible abduction, and when the Prince's court moved from Leicester House to Richmond for the summer, as etiquette did not permit her to travel in the same coach as the Princess, it was arranged that she should slip away quietly, and so evade her husband. Therefore, on the day the court set out, the Duke of Argyll and Lord Islay, who were her great friends, conveyed Mrs. Howard very early in the morning to Richmond in a private coach. But this state of affairs could not continue. If Howard carried the matter into the law courts, he could force his wife to return to him, willy-nilly, and the spectacle of the Prince and Princess of Wales defying the law by detaining her was not one which could be allowed. Therefore, after a good deal of negotiation, the matter was settled by Howard's allowing his wife to remain in the Prince's household in return for the sum of £1,200 a year, paid quarterly in advance. He had never really wished her to come back, and the whole dispute at last

narrowed itself into an attempt to extort money on the one hand, and to withhold it on the other—a dispute far from creditable to any one concerned in it.

As the royal palaces of Windsor, Hampton Court and Kensington were now closed to the Prince and Princess of Wales, it was necessary that they should have some country house, and Richmond was fixed upon as their summer residence. Richmond Lodge, situated in the little, or old park of Richmond, had been the residence of Ormonde before his flight, and he had lived here in great luxury. "It is a perfect Trianon," says a contemporary writer; "everything in it, and about it, is answerable to the grandeur and magnificence of its great master." The house itself was not very large; it is described as "a pleasant residence for a country gentleman," but the gardens were beautiful. Ormonde's estates were forfeited for high treason, and Richmond Lodge came into the market. The Prince of Wales bought it for £6,000 from the Commissioners of the Confiscated Estates Court, though not without difficulty, for the King endeavoured to prevent his obtaining it.

Richmond was much more in the country then than now, and there were very few houses between it and Piccadilly, except Kensington Palace. The road thither was lonely, and infested with highwaymen and dangerous characters. At night it was very unsafe. Bridget Carteret, one of the maids of honour, when attending the Princess on one of

these journeys, had her coach stopped by highwaymen, and was forced to give up all her jewels.[1] The Princess gave her a diamond necklace and gold watch in place of the trinkets she had lost. There were other drawbacks, too, for we read: "Richmond Lodge having been very much pestered with vermin, one John Humphries, a famous rat physician, was sent for from Dorsetshire by the Princess, through the recommendation of the Marchioness of Hertfordshire, who collected together five hundred rats in his Royal Highness's Palace, which he brought alive to Leicester House as a proof of his art in that way".[2] He must have been a veritable Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Richmond Lodge soon became quite as gay as Leicester House; a great number of the nobility drove down by road on their coaches, or came by water in their barges, during the summer months. Lady Bristol, who was one of the Princess's ladies, writes from here: "Yesterday there was a horse race for a saddle, etc., the Prince gave; 'twas run under the terrace wall for their Royal Highnesses to see it. There was an infinite number of people to see them all along the banks; and the river full of boats with people of fashion, and that do not come to court, among whom was the Duchess of Grafton and Mr. and Mrs. Beringer. They all stayed, until it was late, upon the water to hear the Prince's music, which sounded much sweeter than from the shore.

[1] *Weekly Journal* and *Saturday's Post*, 13th June, 1719.
[2] Brice's *Weekly Journal*, 30th December, 1719.

Every one took part in the Prince and Princess's pleasure in having this place secured to them when they almost despaired of it, and though such a trifle, no small pains were taken to disappoint them." [1]

From Richmond the Prince and Princess of Wales hunted several days in the week, going out early in the morning and coming back late in the afternoon, riding hard all day over a rough country. It was a peculiarity of the Prince's court that all its pleasures were in excess. The hunt was largely attended, and many of the maids of honour rode to hounds; some of them would have shirked this violent exercise had they dared, but the Prince would not let them off. Pope writes: "I met the Prince, with all his ladies on horseback, coming from hunting. Mrs. Bellenden and Mrs. Lepel took me under their protection (contrary to the laws against harbouring Papists), and gave me dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversation with Mrs. Howard. We all agreed that the life of a maid of honour was of all things the most miserable, and wished that every woman who envied it had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in a morning, ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with a fever, and (what is worse a hundred times), with a red mark on the forehead from an uneasy hat; all this may qualify them to make excellent wives for fox-hunters, and bear abundance of ruddy com-

[1] The Countess of Bristol to the Earl of Bristol, Richmond, 14th July, 1719.

plexioned children. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simper an hour, and catch cold in the Princess's apartment; from thence (as Shakspeare has it), to dinner with what appetite they may, and after that, till midnight, walk, work or think, which they please."

Richmond boasted of springs of water which were supposed to have health-giving properties. As soon as the Prince and Princess of Wales settled in the place, the value of these wells greatly increased, and the number of ills they were declared to cure was quite extraordinary. A pump-room and an assembly-room were built, ornamental gardens were laid out, and a great crowd of people of quality flocked thither, nominally to drink the waters, really to attach themselves to the Prince's court. Balls, bazaars and raffles were held in the assembly-rooms, and an enterprising *entrepreneur*, one Penkethman, built a theatre on Richmond Green, and to his variety entertainments the Prince and Princess were wont to resort. Thus we read: "On Monday night last Mr. Penkethman had the honour to divert their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princesses of Wales, at his theatre at Richmond, with entertainments of acting and tumbling, performed to admiration; likewise with his picture of the Royal Family down from the King of Bohemia to the young princesses, in which is seen the Nine Muses playing on their several instruments in honour of that august family".[1]

Caroline grew very fond of Richmond. She

[1] *Daily Post*, 23rd August, 1721.

interested herself closely in the prosperity of the village, and in the welfare of its poorer inhabitants, aiding the needy, and subscribing liberally to the schools and charities. In later years she always came back to Richmond as to home, and though her grandson George the Third, who resented her attitude to his father Frederick Prince of Wales, tried to destroy every sign of her occupation, it still remains identified with her memory.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RECONCILIATION.

1718–1720.

THE life of the Princess of Wales at this time was apparently an endless round of pleasure. Her days were full of interest and movement, and in the eyes of the world she seemed perfectly happy. But she had her secret sorrow, and a good deal of her gaiety was forced to please her husband. He came first with her, but she was a devoted mother, and there is abundant evidence to show that Caroline felt acutely the separation from her children. The King would not allow them to visit their parents, nor would he suffer the Prince to come and see them, and upon the occasions when the Princess was admitted to St. James's or Kensington, to visit her children, he at first refused to receive her. She went whenever she could spare an hour from her exacting duties at Leicester House, but she had always to obtain leave from the King. In spite of this separation the little princesses kept their love for their parents, and always greeted their mother with demonstrations of joy when she came, and cried bitterly when she went away. "The other day,"

writes the Duchess of Orleans, "the poor little things gathered a basket of cherries and sent it to their father, with a message that though they were not allowed to go to him, their hearts, souls and thoughts were with their dear parents always."[1] Every effort was made by the Prince and Princess to obtain their children, and the law was set in motion, but after tedious delays and protracted arguments, the Lord Chief Justice, Parker, gave it as his opinion that the King had the sole right to educate and govern his grandchildren, and their parents had no rights except such as were granted to them by the King. This monstrous opinion was upheld by nine other judges. It was strongly opposed by the Lord Chancellor, Cowper, who soon afterwards found it advisable to resign the Chancellorship. The King appointed the complaisant Parker in his room, and further rewarded him by creating him Earl of Macclesfield.

The King's hatred of his son grew greater as time went on; everything that took place at Leicester House and Richmond Lodge was reported to him by spies in the Prince's household, and the brilliancy and popularity of the Prince's court were regarded as signs of impenitent rebellion. George the First had the reputation of being an easy-natured man, slowly moved to wrath, and not vengeful to his Jacobite opponents. But his domestic hatreds were extraordinarily intense. He pursued his

[1] The Duchess of Orleans to the Raugravine Louise, St. Cloud, 30th June, 1718.

unfortunate wife with pitiless vindictiveness, and his hatred of her son was only one degree less bitter. To such an extent did it go, that he drew up a rough draft of an Act of Parliament whereby the Prince, on succeeding to the throne of England, should be forced to relinquish Hanover. This project, which would have been the best possible thing for England, perished still-born, for even the time-serving Parker told the King it was impracticable. George then went so far as to receive without rebuke a proposal which Lord Berkeley had the audacity to make, namely, that the Prince should be spirited off quietly to America. Though the King did not dare act upon it, this plan was put on paper, and after George the First's death, Caroline, in searching a cabinet, came across the document.

Though the nation as a whole cared little about the disputes of the Royal Family, this unnatural strife between father and son was well known, and formed a common subject of conversation. As time went on and the quarrel showed no signs of healing, it began to tell seriously against the dynasty. In Parliament the subject was never touched upon, but there was always a dread that it might crop up during debate. On one occasion, when the Prince of Wales was present in the House of Lords, Lord North rose to take notice, he said, "of the great ferment that is in the nation"—and then paused. The Prince looked very uncomfortable, and the whole House was in a flutter, but

Lord North went on to add, "on account of the great scarcity of silver," a matter to which Sir Isaac Newton, as Master of the Mint, was giving serious attention.

Caroline was sensible of the harm this disunion was doing the dynasty, and tried to keep up appearances as far as she could. When the first soreness was over, she attended occasionally the King's drawing-rooms (the Prince, of course, never went), and by addressing him in public forced him to make some sort of answer to her remarks. At first it was thought that the Princess's appearance at the King's drawing-rooms foreshadowed a reconciliation. The subsidised organs in the press hailed it as imminent. One scribe wrote: "It is with extreme joy that I must now congratulate my country upon the near prospect there is of a reconciliation between his Majesty and his Royal Highness. The Princess of Wales's appearance at court can forebode no less. A woman of her consummate conduct and goodness, and so interested in the issue, is such a mediator as one could wish in such a cause. And when it is known that she has been in long conference with the King, there can be no doubt but she has first won upon the Prince to make that submission without which 'tis absurd to think of healing the breach."[1] A petition was also drawn up praying the Princess to act as mediator, which ran as follows:—

[1] *The Criticks: Being papers upon the times*, London, 10th February, 1718.

"To her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

"The petition of several loyal subjects, Englishmen and Protestants,

"Humbly sheweth,

"Whereas the difference between his Majesty and the Prince is of such a nature, as not easily to be decided by any subjects; neither can a Ministry presume to intercede with all the freedom requisite to the determination of it: That by this means it still continues to the unspeakable detriment of the public, the deep sorrow of the well affected to your Royal Highness's family; and the fresh hope and merriment of the disloyal, who were otherwise reduced to the saddest despair. That in such a dismal conjecture we can apply to none so proper as your Royal Highness to assuage these jealousies and reduce both parties to a reunion. Your petitioners therefore beg and entreat your Royal Highness to put in practice that persuasive eloquence by which you are distinguished, and to employ all your interest for this purpose; before the breach be made too wide to admit of a cure, and we involved in irretrievable confusion.

"And your Royal Highness's petitioners will ever pray, etc."

The Princess was both unable and unwilling to mediate in the way suggested, for her sympathies were wholly with her husband. The situation was

still exceedingly strained; the King only received the Princess formally and under protest. Caroline probably went to the King's Court in the hope of softening his heart, and of being allowed to have her children. She was also anxious that her son Prince Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, should be brought over from Hanover, for he was growing up a stranger to her, and the accounts which reached her of his manners and morals were far from reassuring. The malcontent Whigs also considered this a grievance, on the ground that the young Prince should early become acquainted with the country over which he would one day reign. But the King was obdurate. He held that his prerogative gave him absolute power over all the royal children without reference to their parents, and quoted as a precedent Charles the Second's authority over the daughters of the Duke of York.

Caroline was deeply wounded by this refusal, and shed many bitter tears. But it made no difference to her policy of keeping up appearances at all cost. Outside her immediate circle she ignored the fact that there was a difference in the Royal Family, and was careful always to speak of the King in public with great respect. She paid several visits to seats of the principal nobility and gentry near London—we read of her supping with General Harvey at Mitcham, dining with Lord Uxbridge at Drayton, and so forth—and tried in all ways to maintain the credit of the dynasty with the people. When, therefore, a low fellow insulted her and spat in her face

one day as she was crossing Leicester Fields in her chair, he was nearly torn to pieces by the crowd, who resented this gross insult upon a woman, and the only popular member of the Royal Family. The man was handed over to the authorities for punishment, who certainly did not spare the rod if we may judge from the following account :—

"On Thursday morning last, Moore the chairman, who insulted the Princess, was whipped, pursuant to his sentence, from Somerset House to the end of the Haymarket. 'Twas observed that during the performance of this corporal exercise (in which the executioner followed his work pretty close), he wore about his neck, tied to a piece of red string, a small red cross ; though he needed not to have hung out that infallible sign of his being one of the Pope's children, since none but an inveterate Papist would have affronted so excellent a Protestant Princess, whom her very worst enemies cannot charge with a fault. The respect her Royal Highness has among all parties was remarkable in the general cry there was all the way he pass'd of 'Whip him,' 'Whip him' ; and by the great numbers of people that caressed and applauded the executioner after his work was over, who made him cry, 'God bless King George' before he had done with him."[1]

The King's court became duller and duller after the departure of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Official personages were bound to attend, but the general circle of the nobility absented themselves,

[1] *Weekly Journal* or *British Gazeteer*, 18th April, 1719.

and all the youth, wit and beauty of the town migrated to Leicester House or Richmond. Sometimes not more than six ladies attended the royal drawing-rooms at St. James's. The first year of the breach the King spent the summer at Hampton Court, accompanied by his mistresses Schulemburg and Keilmansegge, who had now, thanks to the complaisance of Stanhope and his "German Ministry," been transformed into English peeresses, under the titles of Duchess of Kendal and Countess of Darlington respectively. No doubt they took their "nieces" with them, as they called their illegitimate daughters by the King. The Duchess of Kendal's "niece," Melusina, was now grown up, and some years later married Lord Chesterfield. Lady Darlington's "niece," Charlotte, was younger, and she, too, in time made an equally good match, marrying Lord Howe.[1] These ladies have left no trace of their occupation of Hampton Court, unless it be the "Frog Walk," which is said to be a corruption of *Frau* or *Frow* walk, so called because the German mistresses used to pace up and down it with George the First. But they made their reign infamous by driving the eminent architect, Sir Christopher Wren, from the office of Surveyor-General, at the age of eighty-six, and after a lifetime spent in the public service. The King was instigated to this shameful act by the Duchess of Kendal. Wren had refused to allow her to mutilate Hampton Court with her

[1] Lady Chesterfield had no children, but Lady Howe became mother of the celebrated admiral, Earl Howe.

execrable taste, and in revenge she sold his place to one William Benson.

Under the unlovely auspices of the dull old King and his duller mistresses, Hampton Court was a very different place to what it had been during the summer of the Prince of Wales's regency. "Our gallantry and gaiety," writes Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "have been great sufferers by the rupture of the two Courts, here: scarce any ball, assembly, basset-table or any place where two or three are gathered together. No lone house in Wales, with a rookery, is more contemplative than Hampton Court. I walked there the other day by the moon, and met no creature of quality but the King, who was giving audience all alone to the birds under the garden wall."[1] The King tried to remedy this state of affairs by commanding the Drury Lane Company to come down to Hampton Court and give performances there. The magnificent Great Hall was fitted up as a theatre, and seven plays were performed, of which the favourite was *King Henry the Eighth*. Steele wrote a prologue, and Colley Cibber tells us that the King greatly enjoyed these plays, "as the actors could see from the frequent satisfaction in his looks at particular scenes and passages".[2] In that case the King must have read translations beforehand, as he knew no English—certainly not Shakespeare's English. The expenses of each representation amounted to only £50, but the King

[1] Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 1718.
[2] Colley Cibber's *Apology for My Life*, ed. 1740.

MARY, COUNTESS COWPER.

From the Original Portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

was so delighted that he gave the company £200 in addition, which the grovelling Cibber declares was "more than our utmost merit ought to have hoped for".[1] Basking as he did in the sunshine of the royal favour, Colley Cibber was a stout upholder of the House of Hanover, and a contemner of the House of Stuart. In his comedy *The Non-Juror*, he roundly abused the Jacobites, and his dedication of it to the King will remain as one of the most fulsome dedications of a fulsome age. It began: "In a time when all communities congratulate your Majesty on the glories of your reign, which are continually arising from the prosperities of your people, be graciously pleased, dread Sire, to permit the loyal subjects of your theatre to take this occasion of humbly presenting their acknowledgements for your royal favour and protection".

Apparently George liked this gross flattery, for he often went to see Cibber's plays at Drury Lane. The King hated ceremony, so he dispensed with his coach when he went to the theatre, and set out from St. James's Palace in a sedan-chair, with his guards and the beef-eaters marching alongside, and two other sedan-chairs carried behind him, which contained the Duchess of Kendal and Lady Darlington respectively. The King would not occupy the royal box, but would choose another in some less prominent position, and would sit far back, behind his two mistresses, taking a pinch of snuff now and then, and laughing at their jokes. None

[1] Colley Cibber's *Apology for My Life*, ed. 1740.

of the English officers of the household were admitted to this box, and the King entered and left the theatre by a private door. Once, when going to the theatre in his chair, the King was shot at by a youth named James Shepherd, but the bullet was very wide of the mark. The lad was condemned to be hanged. On account of his youth, Caroline interceded for him, but without success. He died declaring James to be his only King. Concerning this incident, the Duchess of Orleans writes: "The Princess of Wales has told me about the young man that the King has caused to be killed. The lad was only eighteen years of age, but the King is not in the least ashamed of what he has done; on the contrary, he seems to think that he has done a noble action. I fear the King will come to a bad end. His quarrel with the Prince of Wales gets worse every day. I always thought him harsh when he was in Germany, but English air has hardened him still more."[1]

Domestic differences had prevented the King from seeing Hanover for nearly two years; but in May, 1719, his impatience could no longer be restrained, and, despite the remonstrances of his Ministers, he determined to pass the summer in his German dominions. He so far relented towards the Princess of Wales as to send her word that she might spend the summer at Hampton Court with her children. The Princess returned a spirited reply

[1] The Duchess of Orleans to the Raugravine Louise, Paris, 10th March, 1718.

to the effect that unless her husband could go with her she would not go. On this occasion a Council of Regency was established, in which no mention whatever was made of the Prince. The Prince and Princess of Wales were not even allowed to hold levées and drawing-rooms during the King's absence; and his Majesty, by a notice in the *Gazette*, decreed that these functions should be held by the three young princesses, his grandchildren. The Prince and Princess showed their indignation by leaving town at once for Richmond.

The King then set out for Hanover, taking with him Stanhope as Minister in attendance, and accompanied by the Duchess of Kendal. It was perhaps on this journey to Hanover that the following incident took place, which deserves to be quoted, as offering one of the few incidents George the First gave of good taste: "On one of his journeys to Hanover his coach broke down. At a distance in view was a château of a considerable German nobleman. The King sent to borrow assistance; the possessor came, conveyed the King to his house, and begged the honour of his Majesty accepting a dinner while his carriage was repairing; and in the interim asked leave to amuse his Majesty with a collection of pictures which he had formed in several tours to Italy. But what did the King see in one of the rooms but an unknown portrait of a person in the robes, and with the regalia, of a sovereign of Great Britain. George asked him whom it represented. The nobleman replied, with much diffident but decent

respect, that in various journeys to Rome he had been acquainted with the Chevalier de St. George, who had done him the honour of sending him that picture. 'Upon my word,' said the King instantly, ''tis very like to the family'."[1]

The hopes of James and his little Court at Rome now began to revive. The prolonged strife between George the First and his son helped to play the game of the Jacobites; and their agents throughout Europe did not hesitate to exaggerate the facts of the unseemly quarrel, and to declare that England was weary of the Hanoverian family (which it was) and eager for a Stuart restoration (which it was not). Mar had been urging Charles the Twelfth of Sweden to send an expedition to Scotland, and Charles was inclined to listen, when his sudden death put an end to James's hopes. But Spain espoused his cause. Spain was then governed by Cardinal Alberoni. By birth the son of a working gardener, he had begun life as a village priest, and had gradually, by virtue of his many abilities and extraordinary knowledge of men, raised himself from poverty and obscurity to the proud position of a cardinal of the Church and first minister of Spain. Philip, the King, was old and feeble, and entirely ruled by his Queen, and the Queen was governed by Alberoni. The trust was not ill-placed, for the Cardinal's administrative abilities were great. Under his direction trade revived, public credit was increased, a new navy was fitted out, and the army

[1] Horace Walpole's *Reminiscences.*

was reorganised. "Let your Majesty remain but five years at peace," said he to the Spanish King, "and I will make you the most powerful monarch in Europe." Unfortunately for his plans Alberoni was of a restless, intriguing disposition. He disliked the trend of England's foreign policy, and therefore entered into correspondence with James at Rome, and employed agents to foment dissensions in England. The English Government met this with vigorous measures, and a new treaty was concluded with France and the Emperor, which, after the accession of the Dutch, was known as the Quadruple Alliance. Stanhope went to Madrid to see if he could smooth matters with Alberoni, but he did not succeed. The Spanish troops had landed in Sicily, and to prevent the loss of the island, Admiral Byng was despatched to the scene of action with twenty ships of the line. On July 31st, 1718, a naval fight took place between the English and the Spaniards, which resulted in the defeat of the latter. In revenge Alberoni fitted out an armament of five ships to support James. This little fleet was to land on the coast of Scotland, but in the Bay of Biscay it was overtaken by a tempest, and only two of the frigates reached Scotland, having on board the Earls Marischal and Seaforth and the Marquis of Tullibardine, with some arms and three hundred Spanish soldiers. They were joined by a few Highlanders, but, after an insignificant skirmish with the King's troops, were dispersed.

Meantime James had arrived at Madrid, in

response to a special invitation from Alberoni, where he was received with royal honours as King of England, and magnificently lodged in a palace set apart for him and his suite. But when the news of the complete failure of the expedition reached Madrid some months later, Alberoni realised that James was a very expensive guest, and his presence at Madrid was a hindrance to the peace with England that he already wished to make. James, too, was anxious to leave, and a pretext was afforded by the escape of the Princess Clementina, whom he had wedded by proxy. She had at last escaped from Innsbrück, where she had been detained nearly three years. She stole away by night in the disguise of a Scottish maid-servant, and after a long and perilous journey on horseback arrived safe in Venetian territory. On the receipt of this news James took his leave of the Court of Spain, and returned to Rome, where his long-deferred marriage was duly solemnised and consummated.

While these events were taking place, King George had remained at Hanover, heedless of the discontent in England. He returned to London in November, 1719, and a few days later opened Parliament in person. Caroline, true to her policy of keeping up appearances, waited upon the King to congratulate him upon his safe return, and he gave her audience, but controversial matters were not touched upon, and though rumours of reconciliation arose from the interview they were rumours merely. On the contrary, the principal Government measure

was aimed indirectly at the Prince of Wales. Stanhope brought forward the Peerage Bill, to limit the royal prerogative in the creation of new peerages. The Prince of Wales had made use of some rash and unguarded expressions as to what he would do when he came to the throne, and the King was induced by jealousy of his son to consent to this limitation of his royal prerogative. The measure was strongly opposed in both Houses, but the head and front of the opposition was Walpole, who had identified himself with the opposition court of Leicester House. He made an eloquent speech in the House of Commons against the measure, with the result that it was defeated by a large majority. The Government did not resign, but they saw the advisability of conciliating Walpole and the malcontent Whigs, and a political reconciliation took place. Walpole and Townshend accepted minor offices in the Government.

Walpole's accession to the Ministry took the heart out of the Whig opposition, with which the Prince of Wales had more or less identified himself. Having failed to upset the Government, Walpole cast in his lot with them. He set to work with such goodwill that, though for a time he held a subordinate office, he soon became the most powerful member of the Government ; he was already the man with the greatest authority in the House of Commons. From this time may be dated Walpole's alliance with Caroline, and he henceforth played a prominent part in her life.

Robert Walpole, the third son of a Norfolk squire, Walpole of Houghton, was born in 1676. His family had belonged to the landed gentry of England since the days of William the Conqueror, but they had never distinguished themselves in any way. Walpole was educated at Eton, where he had as his school-fellow his future rival, Bolingbroke, and thence proceeded to King's College, Cambridge. On quitting the university he went back to Houghton with a view to becoming a country squire as his father was. The future statesman spent his days at cattle fairs and agricultural shows, with fox-hunting and hard drinking thrown in by way of recreation. Old Squire Walpole was of a very hospitable turn of mind, and kept open house to his neighbours, who often assembled around his jovial board. "Come, Robert," he used to say, "you shall drink twice to my once; I cannot permit my son, in his sober senses, to be a witness of the intoxication of his father." Walpole was married at the age of twenty-five to the beautiful and accomplished Catherine Shorter, a daughter of John Shorter, of Bybrook, Kent. His domestic life was not a model one, both husband and wife arranging to go much as they pleased. Walpole, like his enemy Bolingbroke, was profligate and fond of wine and women, and his young wife also had her intrigues. She had one particularly with Lord Hervey, and her second son (Horace Walpole the younger) was said to be really the son of Lord Hervey. He closely resembled the Herveys in his tastes, appearance and

manner; especially in his effeminacy, which was characteristic of the men of the Hervey family. He was quite unlike his reputed father, Walpole, who was a burly county squire, with a loud voice, heavy features and no refinement of manner or speech. Walpole's wife also (so Lady Cowper says) had an intrigue with the Prince of Wales, and Walpole was cognisant of it, if he did not even lend himself to it, with a view to obtaining the goodwill of the Prince. Both Robert Walpole and his wife were often at Leicester House.

Soon after his marriage Walpole succeeded to the family estate, with a rent-roll of some two thousand a year. He was elected a member for Castle Rising, and he sat in the two last Parliaments of William the Third. In 1702 he was returned as member for Lyme Regis, in the first Parliament of Queen Anne, a borough which he continued to represent for nearly forty years. He quickly made his mark in the House of Commons, and his history from this time onward is to a great extent the history of his country. He was a Whig by conviction and education; he had a passion for work, and a fixed ambition which carried him step by step to the highest offices in the State. His zeal in furthering the Whig cause early won for him the hatred of the Tories, and at the instigation of Bolingbroke, when the Tories came into power, Walpole was charged with corruption and other misdemeanours, and thrown into the Tower. It was perhaps the best thing that could have happened to him, for it called public attention to his personal-

ity, and awoke the admiration of his friends. So crowded was his room in the Tower that it resembled a levée; some of the first quality of the town went there, including the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. His confinement in the Tower was not a long one. On the accession of George the First Walpole's attachment to Whig principles and the House of Hanover was rewarded by his being given a place in the Administration of Lord Townshend, who had married his sister. The rest has been told.

Walpole's first step after he rejoined Stanhope's Government was to bring about a reconciliation between the Prince of Wales and the King, and to this end he addressed himself to the Princess of Wales. During the winter of 1719 Walpole had often been twice a day at Leicester House, and he realised, what many were still ignorant of, the great and increasing influence which the Princess exercised over her husband. Moreover, the Princess had recently received the King's compliments on her birthday for the first time for two years. To the Princess, therefore, Walpole first went with the suggestion of reconciliation, and begged her to induce the Prince to write a submissive letter to the King. Caroline was willing to do all she could to bring about a reconciliation, but she stipulated for one thing above all others—that her children should be returned to her. This Walpole promised, though he must have known at the time that he had no power to make such a promise. The Prince at first blustered and swore, and said that nothing would induce him

to make any overtures to the King, and he stipulated that he should have the Regency again, the *entrée* of the royal palaces, his guards, and, of course, the custody of his children. Walpole told him he would do what he could, and he so "engrossed and monopolised the Princess to a degree of making her deaf to everything that did not come from him".[1] He then went to the King and told him that the Prince was anxious to submit himself.

The King at first was obdurate, and refused to see his son under any circumstances whatever. "Can't the Whigs come back without him," he grumbled to Sunderland. Then he said he would receive him, provided he were brought back "bound hand and foot". When conditions were hinted, the King at once said that he would have nothing more to do with the matter, and was only persuaded to reconsider his words by his Ministers representing that, unless he could meet them half-way, they would not be able to get his debts paid, which by this time had amounted to £600,000 in excess of the ample Civil List. As the King kept practically no court in England, most of the money must have been spent in Hanover, or given to his Hanoverian minions and mistresses. Ministers argued that a reconciliation would do something to restore public credit, and the long quarrel had seriously affected the popularity of the Royal Family. The Prince was also amenable to this argument, as he, too, was in debt some £100,000, the result, no doubt, of the

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

state he had kept up at Leicester House. Walpole gave the Prince to understand that this sum would be paid, and by way of showing his goodwill, he put him and the Princess in the way of making a little money in South Sea stock.

The Princess was prepared to let everything go if she could only have her children back again, and the Bishop of Norwich went down on his knees to Townshend and Walpole, and swore that the Princess should have her children. She said: "Mr. Walpole, this will be no jesting matter to me; you will hear of this, and my complaints, every day and hour, and in every place, if I have not my children again". Walpole suggested that the Princess should make overtures to the Duchess of Kendal, who had more influence than any one with the King, and even to this crowning humiliation the Princess stooped, but all to no purpose; the King absolutely refused to agree to any such stipulation. He had become attached, after his fashion, to the three princesses, and he knew that to retain them would be the surest way of wounding the feelings of his daughter-in-law. The Prince, unlike the Princess, was not obdurate on this point, and he was quite willing to let his daughters go for what he considered more substantial benefits. Walpole promised to pay his debts if he would yield this point, and gave him some more South Sea stock; to the Princess he declared that the King was inexorable, and that she must leave everything in his hands, and all would be well. The Princess wept, and said that she was betrayed,

and the Prince had been bribed, but her tears and lamentations were all to no effect. It was on this occasion she uttered the exceeding bitter cry: "I can say since the hour I was born, I have not lived a day without suffering".

Matters having gone thus far, the Prince wrote the required letter, which was delivered to the King on St. George's Day, April 23rd, 1720. On its receipt Craggs was sent back with a message to the Prince to say that the King would see him. The Prince at once took his chair and went to St. James's Palace, where the King gave him audience in his closet. The Prince expressed his grief at having incurred his royal sire's displeasure, thanked him for having given him leave to wait upon him once more, and said that he hoped all the rest of his life would be such as the King would have no cause to complain of. The King was much agitated and very pale, and could not speak except in broken sentences, of which the Prince said the only intelligible words were: "*Votre conduite, votre conduite*". The audience was over in five minutes, and the Prince then went to see his daughter, the Princess Anne, who was ill of small-pox in another part of the palace. He then set out on his way back to Leicester House, with this difference, that whereas he had come in a private manner, he now departed with the beef-eaters and a guard around his chair, and amid the shouts of the crowd that had assembled outside the palace gates. In Pall Mall he met the Princess, who was on her way to visit her daughter.

She had not been told that the King had sent for her husband, and she was much startled to see him there, thinking he had a bad account of the Princess Anne. He said he had seen the King, and told her the great news. They returned together to Leicester House. "He looked grave," said Lady Cowper of the Prince, "and his eyes were red and swelled as one has seen him on other occasions when he was mightily ruffled. He dismissed all the company at first, but held a drawing-room in the afternoon." By that time the royal guards were established at the gates of Leicester House, and the square was full of coaches. Inside "there was nothing but kissing and wishing of joy". The Prince was so delighted that he embraced Lady Cowper five or six times, whereat the Princess burst into a laugh, and said: "So, I think you two always kiss on great occasions". The Ministers came to offer their congratulations, including the younger Craggs, who was supposed to have inflamed the King's mind against the Prince, and to have called the Princess an opprobrious name. He now protested to her that he had done nothing of the kind, offering to swear it on his oath. She replied: "Fie! Mr. Craggs; you renounce God like a woman that's caught in the fact".

The King received Caroline the next day when she went to visit her daughters at St. James's. He gave her a longer audience than he had given his son, for they went into his closet and stayed there an hour and ten minutes. When the Princess at length

came out of the royal closet, she told her attendants that she was transported at the King's "mighty kind reception". But Walpole had another version of the interview, to the effect that the King had been very rough with her and had chidden her severely. He told her she might say what she pleased to excuse herself, but he knew very well that she could have made the Prince behave better if she had wished, and he hoped henceforth that she would use her influence to make him conduct himself properly. These private interviews over, it was decided to celebrate the reconciliation in a public manner. The Ministers gave a dinner to celebrate the Whig and the royal reconciliation at one and the same time; the King held a drawing-room at St. James's, to which the Prince and Princess went with all their court. The King would not speak to the Prince nor to any of his suite, except the Duchess of Shrewsbury, who would not be denied. When she first addressed him he took no notice, but the second time she said: "I am come, Sir, to make my court, and I will make it," in a whining tone of voice, and then he relented so far as she was concerned. But otherwise the drawing-room could hardly be described as harmonious. "It happened," writes Lady Cowper, "that Lady Essex Robartes was in the circle when our folks came in, so they all kept at the bottom of the room, for fear of her, which made the whole thing look like two armies in battle array, for the King's court was all at the top of the room, behind the King, and the Prince's court behind him. The Prince looked down, and

behaved prodigious well. The King cast an angry look that way every now and then, and one could not help thinking 'twas like a little dog and a cat—whenever the dog stirs a foot, the cat sets up her back, and is ready to fly at him."

The reconciliation thus patched up was a hollow one, but it served to hoodwink the public, and it depressed the Jacobites, who had been saying everywhere that even outward harmony was impossible. Neither side was satisfied; the King was indignant at having to receive the Prince at all, and unwilling to make concessions. He would not grant the Prince and Princess the use of any of the royal palaces, and refused to let them come back to live under the same roof with him. He gave them leave to see the three princesses when they liked, but he refused to part with them, and the Ministers conveniently ignored the payment of the Prince's debts, which indeed were not settled until he came to the throne. All that the Prince and Princess regained were the royal guards and the honours paid officially to the Prince and Princess of Wales, the leave to come to court when they wished, and permission to retain the members of their household, which at one time the King had threatened to discharge *en bloc*. But the great gain to the Government, and to the House of Hanover, was that a formal notification of the reconciliation was sent to foreign courts, and a domestic quarrel, which had become a public scandal, and threatened to become a public danger, was officially at an end.

CHAPTER X.

THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE.

1720.

In June, soon after the reconciliation, the King, attended by Stanhope, set out for Hanover. He had intended to make a longer stay than usual, for everything appeared prosperous and peaceful when he left England. The Ministry was in the plenitude of its power, the Whigs were reconciled, the wound in the Royal Family was healed, or at least skinned over, and the Jacobites were in despair. But this proved to be merely the calm before the storm. In a few months the storm burst with unprecedented violence, and the King's visit was cut short by an urgent summons from the Government, who, like the nation, were plunged into panic and dismay by the collapse of the South Sea Bubble.

The South Sea Bubble was one of the most glittering bubbles that ever dazzled the eyes of speculators. The South Sea Company had been established by Harley, Lord Oxford, in 1711, to relieve taxation. The floating debts at that time amounted to nearly ten millions, and the Lord Treasurer wished to establish a fund to pay off that sum. The interest

was secured by making permanent the duties on wine, vinegar, tobacco, and certain other commodities; and creditors were attracted by the promise of a monopoly of trade with the Spanish coasts of America. This scheme was regarded by friends of the Government as a masterpiece of finance, and it was sanctioned both by Royal Charter and Act of Parliament. The leading merchants thought highly of the scheme, and the nation saw in it an El Dorado. People recalled the discoveries of Drake and Raleigh, and spoke of the Spanish coasts of America as though they were strewn with gold and gems. The Peace of Utrecht ought to have done something to destroy these illusions, for instead of England being granted free trade with the Spanish colonies in America, Spain only gave England the Asiento treaty, or contract for supplying negro slaves, the privilege of annually sending one ship of less than five hundred tons to the South Sea, and establishing certain factories. The first ship of the South Sea Company, the *Royal Prince*, did not sail until 1717, and the next year war broke out with Spain, and all British goods and vessels in Spanish ports were seized. Nevertheless, the South Sea Company flourished; its funds were high, and it was regarded as a sort of rival to the Bank of England.

At the close of 1719 Stanhope's Administration was anxious to buy up and diminish the irredeemable annuities granted in the last two reigns, and amounting to £800,000 per annum. Competing schemes to effect this were sent in by the South

Sea Company and the Bank of England, and the two corporations tried to outbid one another; they went on increasing their offers until at last the South Sea Company offered the enormous sum of £7,500,000, which the Government accepted. The South Sea Company had the right of paying off the annuitants, who accepted South Sea stock in lieu of Government stock, and two-thirds of them agreed to the offer of eight and a quarter years' purchase. There seemed no shadow of doubt in any quarter that this was a most satisfactory solution of the difficulty. The South Sea Company was everywhere regarded as prosperous.

Throughout the summer of this year, 1720, speculation was in the air. The example of John Law's Mississippi scheme in Paris had created a rage for it. Law was a Scottish adventurer, who had some years before established a bank in Paris, and afterwards proceeded to form a West Indian company, which was to have the sole privilege of trading with the Mississippi. It was at first an enormous success, and Law was one of the most courted men in Europe. "I have seen him come to court," says Voltaire, "followed humbly by dukes, by marshals and by bishops." He became so arrogant that he quarrelled with Lord Stair, the English ambassador, and the fact that Lord Stair was recalled shows how great was the financier's power. A great number of Frenchmen amassed large fortunes, and Law's office in the Rue Quincampoix was thronged from daybreak to night with enormous crowds. One

little hunchback in the street was said to have earned no less than 50,000 francs by allowing eager speculators to use his hump as their desk!

As soon as the South Sea Bill had received the royal assent in Parliament, the South Sea Company opened large subscriptions, which were filled up directly. For no reason whatever, its trade, which did not exist, was regarded as a certain road to fortune. The whole of London went mad on the South Sea, and in August the stock, which had been quoted at 130 in the winter, rose to 1,000. Third and fourth subscriptions were opened, the directors pledging themselves that, after Christmas, their dividends should not be less than 50 per cent. Nothing was talked of but the South Sea, and it was gratefully remembered that Oxford, the fallen Minister, had started it. "You will remember when the South Sea was said to be Lord Oxford's bride," wrote the Duchess of Ormonde to Swift. "Now the King has adopted it and calls it his beloved child, though perhaps you may say, that if he loves it no better than his son, it may not be saying much."[1]

If operations had been confined to the South Sea Company ruin might have been averted, or at least postponed, but the town was seized with the lust for speculation. A variety of other bubbles were started simultaneously, and so great was the infatuation that they were seized upon by an eager public. To give the Government its due, it had

[1] The Duchess of Ormonde to Swift, 18th August, 1720.

striven to prohibit such undertakings, describing them in a proclamation as "mischievous and dangerous". But the proclamation was not worth the paper it was written on, and immediately after the King's departure for Hanover, the Prince of Wales himself lent his name as governor of a Welsh copper company. "It is no use trying to persuade him," declared Walpole, whose own hands were far from clean, "that he will be attacked in Parliament, and the 'Prince of Wales's Bubble' will be cried in 'Change Alley." The Prince eventually withdrew, but not until the company was threatened with prosecution, and he had netted a profit of £40,000. The Duchess of Kendal and Lady Darlington were also deeply pledged, and with the examples of such exalted personages before them, the greed of the people at large cannot be wondered at. 'Change Alley repeated the scene in the Rue Quincampoix; it was crowded from morning to night, and so great was the throng that the clerks had to set up tables in the streets. The whole town seemed to turn into 'Change Alley. In the mad eagerness for speculation all barriers were broken down; Tories, Whigs and Jacobites, Roman Catholics, Churchmen and Dissenters, nobility, squires from the country, clergymen, ladies of quality and ladies of no quality at all, all turned gamblers, and and rushed to 'Change Alley. The news-sheets of the day were full of nothing else, and the theatres reflected the popular craze. To quote a topical ballad:—

Here stars and garters do appear,
Among our lords the rabble;
To buy and sell, to see and hear,
The Jews and Gentiles squabble.
Here crafty courtiers are too wise
For those who trust to fortune;
They see the cheat with clearer eyes,
Who peep behind the curtain.

Our greatest ladies hither come,
And ply in chariots daily;
Oft pawn their jewels for a sum
To venture in the Alley.
Young harlots, too, from Drury Lane,
Approach the 'Change in coaches
To fool away the gold they gain
By their impure debauches.

At Leicester House, and in all the great houses, lords and ladies talked of nothing but reports, subscriptions and transfers, and every day saw new companies born, almost every hour. Fortunes were made in a night, and people who had been indigent rose suddenly to great wealth. Stock-jobbers and their wives, Hebrew and Gentile, were suddenly admitted to the most exclusive circles, and aped the manners and the vices of the aristocracy who courted them for what they could get. They drove in gorgeous coaches, decked with brand-new coats of arms, which afforded much opportunity for ridicule. Only the mob, who hooted them in the streets, was not complaisant.

Some of the companies hawked about were for the most preposterous objects, such as companies "To make salt water fresh," "To build hospitals for bastard children," "For making oil from sunflower seeds," "For fattening of hogs," for "Trading in human

THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE.

From an old Cartoon.

hair," for "Extracting silver from lead," for "Building of ships against pirates," for "Importing a number of large jackasses from Spain," for "A wheel with a perpetual motion," and, strangest of all, for "An undertaking which shall in due time be revealed".[1] For this last scheme the trusting subscribers were to pay down two guineas, "and hereafter to receive a share of one hundred, with the disclosure of the object". So gullible was the public, that one thousand subscriptions were paid in the course of the morning. The projector levanted in the evening, and the object of the undertaking was revealed.

The disenchantment was not long in coming. The South Sea directors, jealous of all who came in opposition to their schemes, began legal proceedings against several bogus companies, and obtained orders and writs of *scire facias* against them. These companies speedily collapsed, but in their fall they dragged down the fabric of speculation on which the South Sea Company itself was reared. The spirit of distrust was excited, and holders became anxious to convert their bonds into money. By the end of September South Sea stock had fallen from 1,000 to 150. The panic was general. Money was called up from the distant counties to London, goldsmiths were applied to, and Walpole used his influence with the Bank of England—but all to no purpose, so great was the disproportion between paper promises and the coin wherewith to pay. Public confidence

[1] *The Political State of Great Britain* gives a list of these bubbles, in July, 1720, amounting to 104.

had been shaken, and could not be restored. The news of the crash in Paris, caused by the failure of Law's Mississippi scheme, completed the general ruin. Everywhere were heard lamentations and execrations. The Hebrew stock-jobbers and their wives made their exit from English society as suddenly as they had entered it, and for at least a century were no more seen in noble mansions.

Though a few persons had managed to amass large fortunes by selling out in time—Walpole was one of them, selling out at 1,000—thousands of families were reduced to utter beggary, and thousands more within measurable distance of it. A great cry of rage and resentment went up all over the country, and this cry was raised not only against the South Sea directors, but against the Government, the Prince of Wales, and even the King himself. There was a very general feeling that some one ought to be hanged, and public indignation was directed chiefly against the heads of the Treasury, the South Sea directors, and the German Ministers and mistresses, who were suspected of having been bribed with large sums to recommend the project. So threatening was the outlook against them that the Hanoverian following, at least that part of it which the King had left behind in England, were in a great panic, and in their fright gave utterance to the wildest schemes. One suggested to the Prince of Wales the resignation of the Royal Family, and flight to Hanover; another that it would be well to bribe the army, and proclaim an absolute power; and

yet another advised the Government to apply to the Emperor for foreign troops. But such mad plans, though proposed, were never seriously considered by the English Ministers, who, at their wits' end what to do next, sent to the King at Hanover urging his immediate return. George landed at Margate on November 9th, but so far from his presence having any effect on the falling credit of the South Sea funds, they dropped to 135 soon after.

Parliament met on December 8th thirsting for vengeance. It was thought that the South Sea directors could not be reached by any known laws, but "extraordinary crimes," one member of Parliament declared, "called for extraordinary remedies," and this was the temper of the House of Commons. A Secret Committee was appointed to inquire into the affairs of the South Sea Company, and while this committee was sitting a violent debate took place in the House of Lords, when the Duke of Wharton, the ex-president of the Hell-Fire Club, vehemently denounced the Ministry, and hinted that Lord Stanhope, the Prime Minister, was the origin of all this trouble, and had fomented the dissension between the King and the Prince of Wales. He drew a parallel between him and Sejanus, who made a division in the Imperial family, and rendered the reign of Tiberius hateful to the Romans. Stanhope rose in a passion of anger to reply, but after he had spoken a little time he became so excited that he fell down in a fit. He was relieved by bleeding, and carried home, but he died the next day. He was

the first victim, and the greatest, of the South Sea disclosures.

The Prime Minister was happy, perhaps, in the moment of his death, for when the committee reported, a tale of infamous corruption was disclosed. It was found that no less than £500,000 fictitious South Sea stock had been created, in order that the profits might be used by the directors to facilitate the passing of the Bill through Parliament. The Duchess of Kendal, it was discovered, had received £10,000, Madame Platen another £10,000, and two "nieces," who were really illegitimate daughters of the King, had also received substantial sums. Against them no steps could be taken. But among the members of the Government who were accused of similar peculations were the younger Craggs, Secretary of State, his father, the Postmaster-General, Charles Stanhope, Aislabie and Sunderland. The very day this report was read to Parliament the younger Craggs died; he was ill with small-pox, but his illness was no doubt aggravated by the anxiety of his mind. A few weeks later his father poisoned himself, unable to face the accusations hurled against him. Charles Stanhope was acquitted by the narrow majority of three. Aislabie was convicted; he was expelled from Parliament, and sent to the Tower, and the greater part of his property forfeited. There were bonfires in the city to celebrate the event. Sunderland was declared to be innocent, but the popular ferment against him was so strong that he was unable to continue at the

head of the Treasury, and resigned. Some months later he died so suddenly that poison was rumoured, but the surgeons, after a post-mortem examination, declared that it was heart disease. The South Sea directors were condemned in a body, disabled from ever holding any place in Parliament, and their combined estates, amounting to above £2,000,000, were confiscated for the relief of the South Sea sufferers. They were certainly punished with great severity; some of them at any rate were innocent of the grosser charges brought against them, but public opinion thought that they were treated far too leniently. The "Cannibals of 'Change Alley," as they were called, were, if we may believe the pamphlets of the day, fit only for the common hangman.

In the Ministry now reconstituted the chief power was placed in the hands of Robert Walpole, who became, and remained for the next twenty years, the first Minister of State. The hour had brought the man. It was felt by everyone, even by his enemies, that there was only one man who could restore the public credit, and he was Walpole. Nevertheless, when he brought forward his scheme, into the details of which it is unnecessary to enter, many were dissatisfied. It was, of course, impossible to satisfy everybody, though Walpole's scheme was the best that could be devised, and as far as possible did justice to all parties. The proprietors of the irredeemable annuities were especially dissatisfied, and roundly accused Walpole of having made a

collusive arrangement with the Bank of England, and concerted his public measures with a view to his personal enrichment. The accusation may have been true, but whether it was so or not, the fact remains that he was the only man who stood between the people and bankruptcy, and carried the nation through this perilous crisis.

The general election of the following year, 1722, gave the Government an overwhelming majority, and made Walpole master of the situation, with almost unlimited power.

A great man, as great as or greater than Walpole, died at this time—John, Duke of Marlborough. His career lies outside the scope of this book, it belongs to an earlier period, but this at least may be said: whatever his faults, his name will always remain as that of one of the greatest of Englishmen. He had had a paralytic stroke in 1716, so that he had retired from active politics for some time, and his death made no difference to the state of affairs. He left an enormous fortune to his widow, Duchess Sarah, who survived him more than twenty years. So great was her wealth that she was able in some degree to control the public loans, and affect the rate of interest. She was a proud, imperious, bitter woman, but devoted to her lord, and though she had many offers of marriage, especially from the Duke of Somerset and Lord Coningsby, she declared that she would not permit the "Emperor of the World" to succeed to the place in her heart, which was ever devoted to the memory of John Churchill. Marlborough was

buried with great magnificence at Westminster Abbey, but none of the Royal Family attended the funeral, though the Prince and Princess of Wales and the little princesses viewed the procession from a window along the line of route. The King did not even show this mark of respect to the dead hero, who, at one time, had he been so minded, could have effectually prevented the Elector of Hanover from occupying the throne of England.

The confusion and discontent which followed the South Sea crash were favourable to the Jacobites, and the unpopularity of the King was increased by the recent revelations of the rapacity of his mistresses. "We are being ruined by trulls, and what is more vexatious, by old, ugly trulls, such as could not find entertainment in the hospitable hundreds of old Drury,"[1] wrote a scribbler, who for this effusion was sentenced to fine and imprisonment by the House of Commons. Moreover, at this time the Jacobites were further elated by the news that James's Consort had given birth to a son and heir at Rome in 1722, who was baptised with the names of Charles Edward Lewis Casimir, and became in after years the hero of the rising in 1745. A second son, Henry Benedict, Duke of York, and afterwards cardinal, was born in 1725. James's little court seemed to be living in a fool's paradise, for this year (1722) James issued an extraordinary manifesto in which he gravely proposed that George should restore to him the crown of England, and he in

[1] Letter of Decius in *Mist's Journal.*

return would make him King of Hanover, and give him a safe escort back to his German dominions.

A new plot was set afoot by the Jacobites for the landing of five thousand foreign troops under Ormonde, and to this end they opened negotiations with nearly every court in Europe. The Regent of France revealed this to the English ambassador.

Walpole, being now in the fulness of his power, determined to make the plot a pretext for striking at his old foe Atterbury, who was by far the ablest and most powerful of the Jacobites left in England. Atterbury was seated in his dressing-gown in the Deanery of Westminster one morning when an Under-Secretary of State suddenly entered and arrested him for high treason. His papers were seized, and the aged prelate was hurried before the Privy Council, who proceeded to examine him. He, however, would say nothing, answering a question put to him in the words of the Saviour: "*If I tell you, ye will not believe, and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go*".[1] At the conclusion of the investigation he was committed to the Tower, a measure which excited the strongest commiseration; his age, his talents, his long service in the Church, and his blameless life, all being remembered in his favour. On the ground of ill-health, and he was really very ill at the time, he was publicly prayed for by most of the clergy in the churches of London and Westminster. His usage

[1] St. Luke xxii. 67, 68.

while in the Tower was disgraceful to the Minister who prompted it.

Atterbury himself said, when summoned many months later before the House of Lords to stand his trial: "I have been under a very long and close confinement, and have been treated with such severity, and so great indignity, as I believe no prisoner in the Tower, of my age and function and rank, ever was; by which means, what strength and use of my limbs which I had when I was first committed in August last, is now so far declined, that I am very unfit to make my defence against a Bill of such an extraordinary nature. The great weakness of body and mind under which I labour; such usage, such hardships, such insults as I have undergone might have broken a more resolute spirit, and much stronger constitution than falls to my share." Notwithstanding his bodily infirmities, Atterbury made a most able and eloquent defence, which lasted more than two hours, in which he referred to his well-known contempt of ambition or money, and his dislike of the Roman Catholic religion. Atterbury was found guilty of high treason, deprived of all his benefices, and sentenced to be exiled for life. The aged bishop was taken back to the Tower, where he bade farewell to his friends, including Pope, whom he presented with his Bible. The poet was a Roman Catholic, but he kept it as a cherished treasure until the last day of his life. Two weeks later Atterbury was taken under guard to Dover, and sent across the Channel. A great crowd of sympathisers attended his embarkation,

and a vast number of boats followed him to the ship's side. The first news which greeted the venerable exile at Calais was that Bolingbroke had received the King's pardon, and had just arrived at Calais on his return to England. "Then I am exchanged," exclaimed Atterbury, with a smile. "Surely," wrote Pope of this irony of events, "this nation is afraid of being overrun with too much politeness, and cannot regain one great genius but at the expense of another."[1]

Bolingbroke's exile had lasted nine years. Ever since he had broken with James he had lived only for one thing—to get back to England. His first wife died in 1718, and soon after he privately married the Marquise de Villette, a niece of Madame de Maintenon. The lady, who was rich, talented and handsome, was entirely devoted to Bolingbroke; her wealth was at his disposal, she entered into his literary tastes, and sought to further his political ambitions. She even went so far as to change her religion lest her being a Roman Catholic should prejudice him further with the Court of England. The marriage was kept a secret for a long time, and Lady Bolingbroke, as Madame de Villette, came over to England to see what she could do to bring her lord back again. She was received by George the First and at Leicester House. It was thought very likely that she would gain the goodwill of the Princess of Wales, whose views of philosophy, religion and literature had much in

[1] Pope to Swift, 1723.

sympathy with those of Bolingbroke; and in Voltaire they had a friend in common. But in some way Madame de Villette failed at Leicester House; perhaps she overdid her part, perhaps Walpole had effectually prejudiced the Princess against his rival. Caroline believed that Bolingbroke had betrayed James, and said later that Madame de Villette had told her that Bolingbroke had only entered James's service to be of use to the English Government and so earn his pardon. "That was, in short," said Caroline, "to *betray* the Pretender; for though Madame de Villette softened the word, she could not soften the thing; which I owned was a speech that had so much villainy and impudence mixed in it, that I could never bear him nor her from that hour; and could hardly hinder myself from saying to her: 'And pray, Madam, what security can the King have that my Lord Bolingbroke does not desire to come here with the same honest intent that he went to Rome?[1] Or that he swears he is no longer a Jacobite with more truth than you have sworn you are not his wife?'"

Having failed with the Princess of Wales, Madame de Villette next addressed herself to the Duchess of Kendal through her "niece," the Countess of Walsingham, with such good effect that for a bribe of £12,000 the duchess persuaded the King to let Bolingbroke return to

[1] This was a mistake, as Bolingbroke never went to Rome. He entered James's service at Barr and quitted it at Versailles.

England. The duchess hated Walpole for having thwarted her on more than one occasion in some favourite scheme, and her hatred gave her zest to urge the King to grant a pardon to the Minister's great rival and bitterest foe. It says much for the duchess's influence over the King that she was able to obtain it at a time when Walpole was in the zenith of his power. The pardon, however, at first amounted to little more than a bare permission for Bolingbroke to return to England. His attainder remained in force, his title was still withheld, and he was incapable of inheriting estates, and precluded from sitting in the House of Lords, or holding any office. But Walpole had to acquiesce in his return, and no sooner had the pardon passed the great seal than Bolingbroke came back to England, and at once set to work to get his remaining disabilities removed.

He was unfortunate in the moment of his return, for the King and Bolingbroke's friend at court, the Duchess of Kendal, had already set out for Hanover with Townshend and Carteret, and Walpole was carrying on the Government alone. Bolingbroke at first made overtures to Walpole for peace between them, and, if we may believe Horace Walpole (the younger), even went to dine with him at Chelsea. But this effort was too much for the fallen statesman; he choked over the first morsel at dinner, and was obliged to retire from the room. After remaining in England some months, during which he renewed his political friendships, especially

HENRY ST. JOHN, VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

with Sir William Wyndham and Lord Harcourt, Bolingbroke went to Aix-la-Chapelle, hoping to obtain permission to pay his respects to the King at Hanover. Failing in this, he returned to Paris, where, on the sudden death of the Regent, he gave valuable information against the Jacobites to the elder Horace Walpole, then ambassador, by way of showing his devotion to the House of Hanover, but though Horace Walpole made use of Bolingbroke's information, he treated him ungraciously.

The King remained in Hanover some time, and later in the year, 1723, went to Berlin on a visit to his son-in-law, King Frederick William of Prussia, and his daughter, Queen Sophie Dorothea.

The Court of Berlin was very different to what it had been in the days of the splendour-loving King Frederick and his brilliant consort, Sophie Charlotte. The penurious habits which Sophie Charlotte had lamented in her son when he was a youth had now developed into sordid avarice, and his boorish manners into a harsh and brutal despotism. At the Prussian Court economy was the order of the day, and in the State everything was subservient to militarism. The misery and squalor of the King of Prussia's household are graphically told in the Memoirs of his daughter Wilhelmina.[1] The half-mad King was subject to fits of ungovernable fury, in

[1] *The Memoirs of Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth.* Carlyle drew largely on these Memoirs for the first two volumes of his *Frederick the Great.* But the book has since been admirably translated into English by H.R.H. the Princess Christian, and the quotations which follow are taken from her translation.

which he sometimes kicked and cuffed his children, starved them, spat in their food, locked them up, and cursed and swore at them. His Queen, except for the beatings, was subject to much the same treatment, and the home life was made wretched by perpetual quarrels.

Queen Sophie Dorothea had much beauty and considerable ability, and despite her frequent disputes with her husband, she was, after her fashion, much attached to him, and he to her. But she had a love of intrigue and double-dealing, and she was incapable of going in the straight way if there was a crooked one. She was a woman of one idea, and this idea she clung to with an obstinacy and tenacity which nothing could weaken. For years—almost from the moment of the birth of her children—she had become enamoured of what was afterwards known as the "Double Marriage Scheme," a scheme to unite her eldest daughter Wilhelmina, to Frederick, Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Prince of Wales), and her son, Frederick William (afterwards Frederick the Great), to the Princess Amelia, second daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales. By continual arguments, and perpetual intrigues, she had brought her husband round to her way of thinking, and she had also worked upon her father, George the First, to the extent of gaining his consent to the marriage of the Princess Amelia, when she should be old enough, to the Crown Prince Frederick.

But King George did not approve of the idea of marrying his grandson Frederick to Wilhelmina;

Lady Darlington had given him a bad account of her. "She said that I was *laide à faire peur* and deformed," writes Wilhelmina indignantly, "that I was as bad as I was ugly, and that I was so violent that my violence often caused me to have epileptic fits." Wilhelmina declared that Lady Darlington maliciously spread these falsehoods because she knew the young princess was exceedingly clever, and she did not want any more clever women about the English Court; Caroline was more than enough for her. But Lady Darlington was not the only opponent: the Princess of Wales also did not favour the double marriage scheme so far as Wilhelmina was concerned, and the Prince of Wales did not favour it at all. He hated his cousin and brother-in-law, the King of Prussia; he had hated him as a boy, and he hated him more when he was a rival for the hand of Caroline. He also disliked his sister, for whom he had never a good word. But at this time, what the Prince and Princess of Wales might think about the marriage of their children was of no importance to the Queen of Prussia. What King George thought was a different matter, and, acting on the advice of the Duchess of Kendal, who had been brought round to favour the scheme by a judicious expenditure of money, she implored her father to come to Berlin and see Wilhelmina for himself, as the best way of answering Lady Darlington's malicious fabrications.

To Berlin accordingly George the First came. He arrived at Charlottenburg on the evening of

October 7th, where the King and Queen and the whole court were assembled to welcome him. Wilhelmina was presented to her grandfather from England. "He embraced me," she says, "and said nothing further than 'She is very tall; how old is she?' Then he gave his hand to the Queen, who led him to her room, all the princes following. No sooner had he reached her room than he took a candle, which he held under my nose, and looked at me from top to toe. I can never describe the state of agitation I was in. I turned red and pale by turns; and all the time he had never uttered one word." Presently the King left the room to confer with his daughter, and Wilhelmina was left alone with the English suite, including my Lords Carteret and Townshend, who at once began their inspection by talking to her in English. She spoke English fluently, and after she had talked to them for more than an hour, the Queen came and took her away. "The English gentlemen," said Wilhelmina, "said I had the manners and bearing of an English woman; and, as this nation considers itself far above any other, this was great praise."

King George, however, remained undemonstrative. Wilhelmina calls him "cold-blooded," and so "serious and melancholy" that she could never muster up courage to speak to him all the time he was at Berlin. There was a great banquet in the evening, though King Frederick William must have sorely grudged the expense. "The Queen," says Wilhelmina, "kept the conversation going. We

had already sat for two hours at table when Lord Townshend asked me to beg my mother to get up from the dinner-table as the King was not feeling well. She thereupon made some excuse, saying he must be tired and suggested to him that dinner was over. He, however, several times declared that he was not the least tired, and to prevent further argument on the subject, she laid down her napkin and got up from her chair. She had no sooner done so than the King began to stagger. My father rushed forward to help him, and several persons came to his aid, and held him up for a while, when he suddenly gave way altogether, and had he not been supported, he would have had a dreadful fall. His wig lay on one side, and his hat on the other, and they had to lay him down on the floor, where he remained a whole hour before regaining consciousness. Every one thought he had had a paralytic stroke. The remedies used had the desired effect, and by degrees he recovered. He was entreated to go to bed, but would not hear of it till he had accompanied my mother back to her apartments."

The rest of the visit was spent in *fêtes*, balls and so forth, but a good deal of business was transacted also, and the preliminaries for the double marriage were settled before King George left Berlin for Göhr, a hunting-place near Hanover.

CHAPTER XI.

TO OSNABRÜCK!

1723–1727.

AFTER the reconciliation of the Royal Family the Princess of Wales resumed the place she had occupied at the King's court in the early days of the reign, but in a modified degree. She was restored to her position and precedence, and she regularly attended the drawing-rooms at St. James's, and would make a point of addressing the King in public and so compel him to answer her. After a while the King relented towards her, and asked her to take the lead at ombre and quadrille, as she used to do, and her card-table was surrounded by courtiers as in former days. But he maintained his resentment against his son, to whom he seldom addressed a syllable in public, and rarely received him in private. The King's quarrel from the first had been with the Prince of Wales rather than with the Princess, and Caroline incurred his displeasure only because she insisted on siding with her husband against her father-in-law. George the First had always recognised her character and abilities, and he knew how great her influence was over the Prince. It was because she would not use

this influence to further the King's ends that he disliked her, but he liked talking to her, or rather listening to her talk, for he was a man of few words himself. During the sermon in the Chapel Royal, he often discussed public men and questions with her, a favour he never extended to his son. The King was so surrounded by favourites and mistresses that the royal pew was the only place where Caroline could be sure of an uninterrupted conversation with him, an opportunity of which she freely availed herself, often to the discomfiture of the preacher, for the King would sometimes raise his voice very loud. On one of these occasions the Princess and the King were discussing Walpole. "*Voyez quel homme*," said the King, "he can convert even stones into gold"; an appreciation Caroline noted at the time, and tested later when need arose.

Walpole now carried everything before him. He was the King's first Minister, and enjoyed his unbounded confidence; he was practically dictator in the Government, and his word was law in the House of Commons. But he no longer stood high in the favour of the Prince of Wales; he had not been able, or he had not been willing, to fulfil the promises he had made at the reconciliation. The Prince disliked him because his debts were still unpaid, because he was given no share in the Regency, and because Walpole had "betrayed him," as he said, "to the King". The Princess, too, owed him a grudge, because he had not restored her children to her, and because on more than one occasion he

had spoken of her with great disrespect. In the matter of invective Caroline, however, was able to repay the debt with interest, Walpole's gross bulk, coarse habits, and immoral life all lending barbs to her satire. Despite these amenities, there was a tacit understanding between the Princess and Walpole. Though in adverse camps each respected the other's qualities; Walpole saw in Caroline a woman far above the average in intellect and ability, the tragedy of whose life was that she was married to a fool; while the Princess needed not the King's recommendation to discover the great abilities of the powerful Minister.

Though Caroline frequently pressed Walpole on the subject of her children, he always pleaded that he could do little, the King was inexorable, and the Princesses Anne, Amelia and Caroline remained until the end of the reign in the King's household under the care of their state governess, Lady Portland. The Princess, however, gained concessions as time went by; in addition to the free access to her daughters at all times guaranteed at the reconciliation, they were allowed to visit her at Leicester House and Richmond, and sometimes to appear at the opera with her in the royal box. The enforced separation made no difference to the affection the princesses bore to their mother, but they gradually assimilated some of the contempt for their father which was freely expressed at the King's court, and in later years they (except the gentle Caroline) often spoke of him with disrespect.

During the next few years the Princess of Wales gave birth to three more children, one son, William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, at whose birth there were great rejoicings, and who was ever his mother's favourite child, and two daughters, Mary and Louisa.[1] The Prince of Wales was anxious to have another son, and when the courtiers came to congratulate him on the birth of the Princess Louisa, he said testily, "No matter, 'tis but a daughter". These children were all born at Leicester House, and remained under the care of their parents, the King only claiming the elder children, Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, who was still at Hanover, and the three eldest princesses. The younger family helped Caroline to bear the separation from her elder children.

As George the First grew old his court became duller; not even Caroline could infuse much life into it, or restore the gaiety of the early days of the reign. Many causes contributed to this. One was

[1] GEORGE II. = CAROLINE OF ANSBACH.

Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, b. at Herrenhausen, 1707. M., 1736, Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, d., 1751. Had issue, George III. and others.	Anne, Princess Royal, b. at Herrenhausen, 1709. M., 1733, Prince of Orange, d. 1759.	Amelia Sophia Eleanora, b. at Herrenhausen, 1710, d. 1786, unmarried.	Caroline Elizabeth, b. at Herrenhausen, 1715, d. 1757, unmarried.	George William, b. 1717, at St. James's Palace, died in infancy.	William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, b. at Leicester House, 1721, d. 1765, unmarried.	Mary, b. at Leicester House, 1722. M., 1740, Frederick of Hesse Cassel, d. 1772.	Louisa b. at Leicester House, 1724. M., 1743, King of Denmark, d., 1751.

the depression brought about by the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. The after-effects were felt for a long time, and many of the nobility, who had lost heavily, retired to their country seats to retrench, and had perforce to give up the pleasures of town. As Lord Berkeley wrote in 1720: "So many undone people will make London a very melancholy place this winter. The Duke of Portland is of that number, and indeed was so before."[1] London continued depressed for some years. The Prince and Princess of Wales did their best to make society a little brighter, but they did not throw themselves into court festivities with the same zest as of yore. They were older, their taste for pleasure had lost its keenness, and the novelty of the first Hanoverian reign had quite worn off.

The glory of Leicester House had to a great extent departed also; the reconciliation robbed it of its attractiveness as a centre of opposition, and now that the Prince and Princess went to St. James's again, all the royal festivities took place there. Moreover, the courtiers who had thrown in their lot with the Prince of Wales frankly owned themselves disappointed; in spite of all the Prince's loud boasting and defiance, the reconciliation was little short of an unconditional surrender. Events clearly proved that they had overrated his influence, and underrated the King's power. The King had won all along the line; he was likely to live to a green

[1] Wentworth Papers. Lord Berkeley to Lord Strafford, 12th November, 1720.

old age, perhaps even to outlive the Prince, and the sycophants were anxious to bask in the royal favour again and catch some sprinklings from the fountain of honour. So they turned their backs on Leicester House, which, in truth, was not so attractive as it had been, for it had lost some of its brightest ornaments. The beautiful Bellenden was married, and in the Prince's disfavour; the fair Lepel had wedded Lord Hervey, and retired to the country, where she occupied herself in writing tedious letters to Mrs. Howard and others, which, though they bear witness to the correctness of her principles, almost make one doubt the sparkling wit with which her contemporaries have credited her. Perhaps marriage had exercised a sobering influence, though she showed not the slightest affection for her husband. Poor Sophia Howe was dying in obscurity of a broken heart. The maids of honour who had taken the place of these had not the *esprit* and beauty of their predecessors. But the popularity of the Princess of Wales continued unabated, and Leicester House was always crowded at her birthday receptions. Thus in 1724 we read:—

"Sunday last, being St. David's Day, the birthday of the Princess of Wales, the Stewards of the Societies of Ancient Britons, established in honour of the said anniversary, went and paid their duty to their Royal Highnesses at Leicester House, where they had a most gracious reception, and their Royal Highnesses were pleased to accept of the leek. On Monday the court at Leicester House, to con-

gratulate her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales on her birthday, was the most splendid and numerous that has been known, the concourse being so great that many of the nobility could not obtain admittance and were obliged to return without seeing the Prince and Princess. The Metropolitans of Canterbury and York, together with most of the other bishops, met at the Banqueting House at Whitehall, and proceeded thence in their coaches to Leicester House. The Lord High Chancellor in his robes, and such of the Judges as are in town, went also thither to pay their compliments, as did most of the foreign Ministers, particularly the Morocco Ambassador; but they who were thought to surpass all in dress and equipage were the Duchesses of Buckingham and Richmond, the Earl of Gainsborough and the Countess of Hertford. At one o'clock the guns in the park proclaimed the number of her Royal Highness's years, and at two their Royal Highnesses went to St. James's to pay their duty to his Majesty, and returned to Leicester House to dinner, and at nine at night went again to St. James's, where there was a magnificent ball in honour of her Royal Highness's birthday."[1]

In 1725 the rejoicings were if possible more general; there were bonfires and illuminations in the principal streets of London and Westminster, and several of the nobility illuminated their mansions. For instance: "Monday last, the anniversary of the birthday of the Princess of Wales was celebrated by

[1] *The Weekly Journal* or *British Gazetteer*, 7th March, 1724.

his Grace the Duke of Leeds in a very extraordinary manner in his house upon Mazy Hill, near Greenwich, there being planted before his Grace's door three pyramids, which consisted of a great number of flambeaux, and two bonfires, one between each pyramid, besides which the house was very finely illuminated on the outside, the novelty of which drew a great concourse of people to the place, where the Royal Family's health, together with those of the Ministers and State, were drunk with universal acclamations, to which end wine was served to the better sort and strong beer to the populace."[1] In 1726 we are told: "There was the most splendid and numerous Court at Leicester Fields that has ever been known; a great number of ladies of quality were forced to return home without being able to procure access to the Princess".[2] And in 1727: "The English at Gibraltar celebrated the 1st March, being her Royal Highness's birthday, in a very extraordinary manner, the ordnance of the garrison and the men-of-war discharging vast quantities of shot at the Spaniards, and there was also a most numerous and shining Court at Leicester House".[3] Certainly no such honours have been paid to any Princess of Wales as those paid yearly to Caroline, and the record of them shows that she succeeded in impressing her personality upon the nation, even when she occupied a difficult and subordinate position.

[1] *The Daily Post*, 3rd March, 1725.
[2] *The Daily Journal*, 14th March, 1726. [3] *Ibid.*, 1st April, 1727

The Prince and Princess of Wales had to be very careful to avoid arousing afresh the hostility of the King. The Prince was never again admitted to any share in the Regency, but when the King was away at Hanover they indulged in some little extra state, which was immediately put down on his return. At one time they contemplated a visit to Bath for the Princess to take the waters, and thence to make a semi-state progress through Wales, but the plan was frustrated by the King's jealousy. They sought to make themselves popular with all classes. We read of their attending a concert at the Inner Temple and a ball at Lincoln's Inn, and on one Lord Mayor's Day, when the civic procession went on the Thames to Westminster by barges, the Prince and Princess of Wales and their little son, Prince William, witnessed the show from Somerset Gardens. "Some barges rowed up to the wall, and the liverymen offering wine to their Royal Highnesses, they accepted the same, and drank prosperity to the City of London, which was answered by acclamations of joy."[1] One year the Prince and Princess of Wales, attended by many of their court, went to St. Bartholomew's Fair, and enjoyed themselves heartily among the booths and roundabouts, mingling with the crowd, and staying there until a late hour at night.

The King did not behave generously to his daughter-in-law; all his gold and jewels went to his mistresses, but when he came back from one of his

[1] *The Daily Journal*, 31st October, 1726.

last visits to Hanover, he brought with him a curious specimen of humanity, called the "wild boy," whom he gave to the Princess. Great curiosity was excited in Court circles by this strange present. We read: "The wild boy, whom the King hath presented to the Princess of Wales, taken last winter in the forest by Hamelin, walking on all fours, running up trees like a squirrel, feeding on twigs and moss, was last night carried into the drawing-room at St. James's into the presence of the King, the Royal Family and many of the nobility. He is supposed to be about twelve or thirteen, some think fifteen, years old, and appears to have but little idea of things. 'Twas observed that he took most notice of his Majesty, whom he had seen before, and the Princess giving him her glove, he tried to put it on his own hand, and seemed much pleased with a watch which was held to strike at his ear. They have put on him blue clothes lined with red, and red stockings, but the wearing of them seems extremely uneasy to him. He cannot be got to lie on a bed, but sits and sleeps in a corner of the room. The hair of his head grows lower on the forehead than is common. He is committed to the care of Dr. Arbuthnot, in order to try whether he can be brought to the use of speech and made a sociable creature. He hath begun to sit for his picture."[1]

Caroline may possibly have had some influence

[1] Brice's *Weekly Journal*, 8th April, 1725. This picture may still be seen at Kensington Palace.

with the King in delaying the Queen of Prussia's cherished scheme of the double marriage. An incident also contributed to delay it. There had always been jealousy between the Hanoverian Government and the Court of Berlin, and a very trifling matter served to stir up bad blood. The King of Prussia had formed a regiment of giants in which he took great pleasure and pride. In order to get men of the necessary height and size, he had to seek for recruits all over Europe, and his recruiting sergeants often took them by force. King George had sent his son-in-law some tall Hanoverians, and would have sent him some more, but when the King was absent in England the Hanoverian Government threw difficulties in the way. Frederick William's recruiting sergeants, chancing to light upon some sons of Anak in Hanoverian territory, carried them off by force. This made a great turmoil at Hanover; the men were demanded back, the King of Prussia refused, and the relations between Berlin and Hanover became strained. When King George came to Hanover again, in 1726, the King and Queen of Prussia paid him a visit, the King to smooth matters with his father-in-law, and the Queen to settle the details of the proposed alliance. King George, however, wished to postpone the marriage on the ground that the parties were too young; Wilhelmina was then only fifteen years of age, and the Duke of Gloucester seventeen. But the Queen of Prussia pointed out that the precocious youth

had already set up a mistress of his own, and therefore the plea of youth was unavailing. George then excused himself on the ground that the English Parliament had not yet been consulted about the marriage, but he gave the Queen a definite promise that, when he came to Hanover again, the marriage should be celebrated. He never came again—alive.

The Queen of Prussia had to be content with this promise, and she probably felt that she could afford to wait, as she had won over to her side the Duchess of Kendal, whose influence was all-powerful with the King. The Duchess, who had now been created Princess of Eberstein, enjoyed in her old age a powerful position, and she was paid court to, not only by the Queen of Prussia, but directly or indirectly by the most powerful monarchs of Europe. She was in correspondence with the Emperor at Vienna, and no doubt receiving money from him on the plea of furthering his interests, and she was in indirect communication with the King of France. The curious correspondence between Louis the Fifteenth and his Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, Count de Broglie, reveals how much importance was attached to gaining her influence. In one of his despatches the envoy says:—

"As the Duchess of Kendal seemed to express a desire to see me often, I have been very attentive to her; being convinced that it is highly essential to the advantage of your Majesty's service to be on good terms with her, for she is closely united to the three

Ministers[1] who now govern."[2] And again: "The King visits her every afternoon from five till eight, and it is there that she endeavours to penetrate the sentiments of his Britannic Majesty, for the purpose of consulting the three Ministers, and pursuing the measures which may be thought necessary for accomplishing their designs. She sent me word that she was desirous of my friendship, and that I should place confidence in her. I assured her that I would do everything in my power to merit her esteem and friendship. I am convinced that she may be advantageously employed in promoting your Majesty's service, and that it will be necessary to employ her, though I will not trust her further than is absolutely necessary."[3] The King of France was quite convinced that it was necessary to gain her friendship, for he writes: "There is no room to doubt that the Duchess of Kendal, having a great ascendency over the King of Great Britain and maintaining a strict union with his Ministers, must materially influence their principal resolutions. You will neglect nothing to acquire a share of her confidence, from a conviction that nothing can be more conducive to my interests. There is, however, a manner of giving additional value to the marks of confidence you bestow on her in private, by avoiding in public all appearances which might seem too pointed; by which you will

[1] Walpole, Townshend and the Duke of Newcastle.

[2] *La Correspondance Secrète.* Count de Broglie to the King of France, 6th July, 1724.

[3] *Ibid.*, 10th July, 1724.

avoid falling into the inconvenience of being suspected by those who are not friendly to the duchess; at the same time a kind of mysteriousness in public on the subject of your confidence, will give rise to a firm belief of your having formed a friendship mutually sincere."[1]

These backstair intrigues of France with the Duchess of Kendal probably helped forward the defensive alliance which England concluded at Hanover with France and Russia, commonly known as the Treaty of Hanover, a treaty in which English interests were sacrificed for the benefit of Hanover. "Thus Hanover rode triumphant on the shoulders of England," wrote Chesterfield of it. Yet bad as it was from the English point of view, its provisions did not altogether satisfy the grasping Hanoverians, and Walpole was blamed by them for not having done more for them. Walpole had long realised that the duchess was a force to be reckoned with. "She is in effect as much Queen of England as ever any was," he said of her once, and he declared the King "did everything by her." He soon had occasion to feel her power.

The Duchess of Kendal resented Walpole's influence with his master. It was a peculiarity of this strange creature that she was jealous of any one who enjoyed the confidence of the King, were he man or woman; she had been largely responsible for the fall of Townshend in the early days of the

[1] *La Correspondance Secrète.* Letter of the King of France to the Count de Broglie, 18th July, 1724.

reign, she had been a thorn in the side of Stanhope, and she now directed her energies to undermining the power of Walpole. At first she did not make any impression, for the King was fond of "*le gros homme*," as he called his Prime Minister. He made him a Knight of the Bath, an order which he revived, and afterwards gave him the Garter, the highest honour in the power of the Sovereign. He openly declared that he would never part with him. In his favour he even broke his rule of not admitting Englishmen to his private intercourse, and spent many an evening with Walpole at Richmond, where he had built a hunting lodge. He would drive down there to supper, and he and the Prime Minister would discuss politics over a pipe, and imbibe large bowls of punch, for they both habitually drank more than was good for them. The Duchess of Kendal became jealous of these convivial evenings, and bribed some of the King's Hanoverian attendants to repeat to her what passed, and to watch that the King did not take too much punch. But the effort was not very successful, for the servants could not understand what was said. Walpole could speak no German and little French, and so he and George conversed mainly in Latin, the only language they had in common. Walpole used afterwards to say that he governed the kingdom by means of bad Latin.

The Duchess of Kendal gained an able ally in Bolingbroke, who had now returned again to England, and through the influence of the duchess had

gained the restoration of his title and estates, though not his seat in the House of Lords. "Here I am then," he wrote to Swift, "two-thirds restored, my person safe, and my estate, with all the other property I have acquired or may acquire, secured to me; but the attainder is kept carefully and prudently in force, lest so corrupt a member should come again into the House of Lords, and his bad leaven should sour that sweet untainted mass." Bolingbroke now entered into an alliance with the opposition in the House of Commons, and intrigued with the Duchess of Kendal to oust Walpole from the King's favour. Had they been given time, they might have succeeded. The Duchess of Kendal presented to the King a memorial, drawn up by Bolingbroke, on the state of political affairs, and she persuaded him to grant the fallen statesman a private audience. Walpole declared years later that the King showed him the memorial, and it was at his suggestion that George the First consented to receive Bolingbroke. During the whole time Bolingbroke was closeted with the King, Walpole stated that he was waiting in the ante-chamber, and when the audience was over, he asked the King what Bolingbroke had said. The King replied indifferently: "Bagatelles, bagatelles". But the fact that the King, who had dismissed Bolingbroke from office, and refused to receive him in 1714, when he first came to England, (though that was before his attainder), now consented to give him a special audience looked ominous for his great rival. Bolingbroke boasted that the King was

favourably inclined to him, and only deferred making him Prime Minister until his return from Hanover, where he was soon setting out. But he could have had no grounds for the latter statement, though what he and the Duchess of Kendal might have achieved in time it is impossible to say.

Since the King's visit to Hanover the previous summer, his divorced wife, Sophie Dorothea, had died at Ahlden (November 13th, 1726), after thirty-three years' captivity in her lonely castle, where she had never ceased from the first hour of her imprisonment to demand release. Prince Waldeck arrived in England with secret despatches giving an account of the ill-fated princess's last moments, and the Courts of Hanover and Berlin assumed mourning, for the deceased Princess was the mother of the Queen of Prussia, and by birth Princess of Celle. It would have suited the King better to ignore the death of his hated consort altogether, but he was unable to do so after the public notice that had been taken of it by the Court of Berlin. So he had a notice inserted in the *London Gazette* to the effect that the "Duchess of Ahlden" had died at Ahlden on the date specified. He countermanded the court mourning at Hanover, and he would not allow the Prince and Princess of Wales to assume mourning for their mother, or make any allusion to her death. He himself, the very day he received the news, went ostentatiously to the theatre, attended by his mistresses. But he was superstitious, and therefore

a good deal worried by remembering a prophecy that he would not survive his wife a year.

It was rumoured that the King morganatically married the Duchess of Kendal soon after Sophie Dorothea's death, and that the Archbishop of York performed the ceremony privately. But there was nothing to prove the rumour, and the duchess was never acknowledged as the King's wife, either morganatically or otherwise. She always assumed airs of virtue and respectability, and was regular in her attendance of the services at the Lutheran Chapel Royal, though one of the pastors in years gone by had refused to administer the sacrament to her, on the ground that she was living with the King in unrepentant adultery. He was soon replaced by another more complaisant. It is exceedingly unlikely that a morganatic marriage took place, for the King, shortly after the death of his ill-treated consort, took to himself another mistress, who in time might have proved a formidable rival to the old-established favourites. On this occasion he selected an Englishwoman, Anne Brett, a bold and handsome brunette, who was the daughter of the divorced Countess of Macclesfield by her second husband, Colonel Brett. Anne demanded a coronet as the price of her complaisance and the old King was so enamoured that he promised her everything she wished. He lodged her in St. James's Palace, gave her a handsome pension, and promised the title and coronet on his return from Hanover. He set out thither on June 3rd, 1727, accompanied by the Duchess of

Kendal, and Lord Townshend as Minister in attendance.

Mistress Brett was left in possession of the field, for Lady Darlington had ceased to count, and she soon gave the court a taste of her quality. Her apartments adjoined those of the King's granddaughters, Anne, Amelia and Caroline, and Mistress Brett ordered a door leading from her rooms to the garden to be broken down. The Princess Anne ordered the door to be blocked up again, whereat Mistress Brett flew into a rage, and told the workmen to pull down the barriers. But she had met her match in the Princess Anne, who, haughty and determined beyond her years, immediately sent other men to enforce her orders. When the dispute was at its height, news came from Hanover that the King was dead. Anne Brett was turned out of St. James's Palace, her coronet vanished into air, and she was more than content, some years later, to marry Sir William Leman, and retire into obscurity. The King's death foiled more than Anne Brett's expectations; it shattered Bolingbroke's hopes to the dust, and postponed indefinitely the double marriage scheme so dear to the heart of the Queen of Prussia.

The King had landed in Holland four days after leaving Greenwich, and he set out to accomplish the overland journey to Hanover, apparently in his usual health. The Duchess of Kendal stayed behind at the Hague to recover from the crossing, which always made her ill. Attended by a numerous

escort, the King reached Delden, on the frontier of Holland, on June 9th. Hard by he paid a visit to the house of Count Twittel, where he ate an enormous supper, including several water-melons. His suite wished him to stay the night at Delden, but after resting there a few hours to change horses, he set off again at full speed in the small hours of the morning. According to Lockhart it was here that the letter was thrown into the King's coach which had been written by the ill-fated Sophie Dorothea, upbraiding her husband with his cruelty, and reminding him of the prophecy that he would meet her at the divine tribunal within a year and a day of her death.[1] Whether it was the letter, or the supper, or a combination of both, it is impossible to say, but soon after leaving Delden the King became violently disordered and fell forward in a fit. When he partly recovered, his attendants again urged him to rest, but he refused. The last stage of the journey was accomplished in furious haste, the King himself urging on the postilions and shouting: "To Osnabrück, to Osnabrück!" Osnabrück was reached late at night, but by that time the King was insensible. His brother, the Duke of York, Prince-Bishop of Osnabrück, came out to meet him. The King was borne into the castle, and restoratives were applied, but he never recovered consciousness, and breathed his last in the room where he had been born sixty-seven years before.

[1] *Lockhart Memoirs.* This letter, Lockhart states, was shown him the year of the King's death by Count Welling, Governor of Luxemburg.

Thus died the first of our Hanoverian Kings. To judge him impartially we must take into consideration his environment and the age in which he lived. So viewed, there is something to be said in extenuation, something even in his favour. His profligacy was common to the princes of his time, his coarseness was all his own. He was a bad husband, a bad father, bad in many relations of life, but he was not a bad king. He kept his compact with England, he was strictly a constitutional monarch, he respected the rights of the people, and his views on civil and religious liberty were singularly enlightened. His excessive fondness for Hanover was an undoubted grievance to his English subjects, but, on the other hand, it did him honour, as it showed that he did not forget his old friends in the hour of prosperity. Though as King of England he was a stranger in a strange country, and surrounded by faction and intrigue, he played a difficult part with considerable skill. The great blot upon his reign was the execution of the Jacobite peers; the great stain upon his private life, the vindictive cruelty with which he hounded his unfortunate wife to madness, and death. For the first he was only partly responsible, the second admits of no palliation. Yet with all his failings he was superior to his son, who now succeeded him as King George the Second.

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